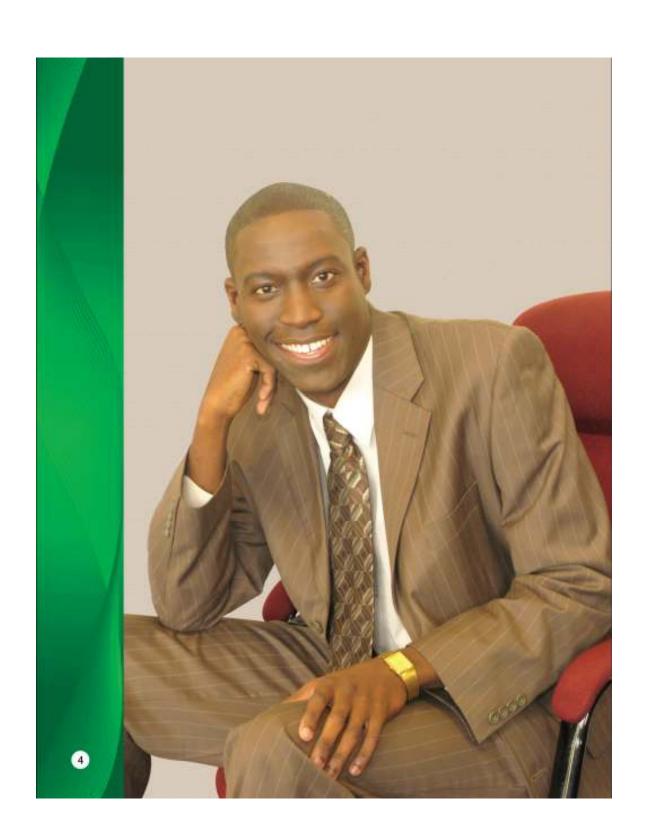




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Vision

Empowered young people who are able to make informed choices so that they can lead meaningful enjoyable lives and contribute to the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The youth policy defines youth as a person between the ages of 12 and 29 years who is becoming independent of parents and learning to master the biological, psychological, political, economic and social changes associated with this period of transition. (Vide: Introduction)

The policy provides a broad framework within which Government's youth policy initiatives will be executed. It is not a series of programmes but a flexible and dynamic process of interaction between government and civil society from which programmes, activities and projects would emerge. It is a social developmental process which advocates a culturally relevant participatory approach which places youth at the forefront of policy development and implementation. It emphasizes youth empowerment while recognizing Government's responsibility to create a facilitative framework and to provide support to ensure the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago and the attainment of its vision of First World status by 2020 (Vide: Conceptual Framework).

The policy is informed by issues of globalization, technological change and the emergence of the new work organization which is based on the development of a knowledge and skills-based society. It is also based on the nature of the current situation of youth in Trinidad and Tobago. It takes into consideration Vision 2020 (Vide: The Current Youth Situation in Trinidad and Tobago).

The policy promotes a vision of empowered young people who are able to make informed choices so that they can lead meaningful, enjoyable lives and contribute to sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago.



The policy places emphasis on youth as individuals –Y; on the creation of an enabling environment –E and on the systems and institutions which impact on youth –S. The policy therefore says YES to youth as being valuable and worthy of investment by the national community.

It outlines three (3) main goals from which objectives are identified. (Vide Youth Policy Goals, Objectives and Strategies).

(i) Goal One: an empowered young person with positive values who can use acquired knowledge and skills to make informed choices while meaningfully participating in problem solving and decision making at family, community and national levels.

In the result six (6) objectives with strategies are identified.

- (ii) Goal Two: an enabling environment that will facilitate youth development. There are fourteen (14) objectives with strategies. This goal is the main area of action for Government.
- (iii) Goal Three: support for institutions and systems such as the family, the community, the school, religions and other organizations, which strengthen and sustain youth development.

There are seven (7) objectives and strategies.

The key themes addressed by the policy are:

- Research
- Participation and Inclusion
- · Targeting of 'at risk' youth
- Resource Allocation



- Action
- Implementation
- Transformation
- Empowerment

Although the policy is process oriented it has identified fifteen (15) focal points of action to give rise to a new process and interest in sustained youth development.

These actions are outlined in the action plan and consist of:

- 1. Restructured Youth Service Delivery System
- 2. Creation of a Youth Development Fund
- 3. Creation of a Youth Crime and Violence Unit
- 4. Development of a Youth Employment and Employability Policy
- 5. Expansion of Employment Agencies
- Re-engineering and Expansion of the National Apprenticeship and Service Programme
- 7. Indentification and Co-ordination of Existing Programmes for Youth
- 8. Creation of a Youth Leadership Development Institute
- 9. Institutional Strengthening of the National Youth Council
- 10. Development of a National Youth Assembly
- Support to the Youth Councils in the Project eXpression "Voice of Youth"
- 12. Development of Youth Centres and other Youth -serving Facilities
- 13. Life skill and Peer Educator Programme
- 14. The Block Leadership Initiative for the New Generation (BLING) –
 Vide Action Planning for Youth Development
- 15. Greater Economic and Administrative Support to Youth-Serving Organisations



The policy sees the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs as the youth policy-making body. It would also be responsible for monitoring and evaluating service delivery and be generally responsible for ensuring that agencies charged with service delivery are efficient and effective.



1. INTRODUCTION

The development of a national youth policy for Trinidad and Tobago is viewed as a serious challenge, not only because of the subject matter but also because of its implications for successful and sustainable development. Trinidad and Tobago has embarked on a process to reach first world status by the year 2020. This youth policy may well be seen as the first major step towards the achievement of such a status. Indeed today's youth would be the main architects and beneficiaries of Vision 2020.

The Youth Policy therefore, has serious and far-reaching implications for Trinidad and Tobago's development planning, policy-making, programme development, action planning and implementation.

A fundamental issue facing young people is their relationship with the world. Young people in Trinidad and Tobago form part of a network of societies, which are open to outside cultural, social, political and economic influences. The world is their frame of reference and socio-economic playground. Thus modern information technological devices have greater impact on the shaping of their values. More and more young people are becoming exposed to the Internet, electronic mail and the mobile telephone. Notwithstanding, young people have become very conscious of inequalities as they impact on them and on others in the world. Therefore, one would find that Trinidad and Tobago youth are concerned about social justice, transparency and sustainable development. They are concerned about good governance and about institutions that are inaccessible and unconcerned about young people's issues and ideas.

A significant issue for consideration is Trinidad and Tobago Youth's preparation for participation in a regional economy as envisaged by the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Young people



believe that decisions on these matters are distant from them although these decisions would affect their future lives. There is a major knowledge gap about these institutions and the related decisions which the national society and conscience must not ignore.

Even as one considers globalization, regional integration and technological advancement in the context of a petrochemical and natural gas economy such as Trinidad and Tobago, one must be conscious of the fact that today's youth is living in a society which is still grappling with issues of under-development such as poverty, unemployment, crime and violence, under-developed health services, shortfalls in adequately and appropriately developed human resources and an on-going economic pressure both from international and national circumstances and imperatives. Youth wants to be part of the process of change and transformation.

Conscious of the desire and need for youth involvement and participation, the National Youth Policy Task Force charged with the development of this policy engaged in a methodology of consultation which brought youth to the fore to research, analyze and discuss their situation and to further develop goals, objectives, strategies and action plans to provide solutions.

Members of the Task Force reported that they experienced the impact of the power of participation as the young people of Trinidad and Tobago participated in the consultative mechanism utilized in the various communities to inform the Youth Policy.

It would be useful now to consider the main thrust and elements of the methodology used to inform and develop this national youth policy. The task force placed great emphasis on the use of the youth's and the people's culture as a developmental imperative and mechanism for analysis and popular participation, using it as a driving process which, not only enhanced the policy imperatives themselves but also served



as the central means of empowerment of the youths as they made, shaped and developed goals, objectives, strategies and action plans to implement their policy.

The methodology involved the use of participatory learning action (PLA) drama, storytelling, music, dance – indeed theatre for development, some of which were conducted on the streets. These processes also included community mapping, modelling, seasonal calendar-making, Venn, Pie and Flow diagrams, transects, matrix scoring and other activity programmes.

Additionally, the task force utilized deliberative inclusionary processes (DIP's) – focus groups, citizens juries and other discussive techniques. These two broad techniques gave rise to a great amount of dynamism, excitement and active participation of the youth. Vide Appendix I

DEFINITION OF YOUTH

Youth as a concept or period has been variously defined. The United Nations has defined youth as those in the age range of 15 to 25. The Commonwealth Youth Programme defines youth to be those in age range 15 to 29. Internationally countries use a variety of ranges stretching from as low as zero to as high as 40 years of age.

Trinidad and Tobago has ratified the UN's Convention on the Rights of a Child and as a result it is proposed that a child in Trinidad and Tobago should be a person under age 18. Is it then that a youth should be a person between age 18 and age 25 or even up to age 30?

The National Youth Policy Task Force of Trinidad and Tobago in its report suggests that in Trinidad and Tobago it is the belief that the period of youth commences from between ages 11 to 13 but the functional and real termination age of youth in Trinidad and Tobago poses a challenge.





The policy document therefore, takes some time to discuss the conceptual framework and approach and the current situation of youth before entering into a presentation of the main policy goals, objectives and strategies.

Finally, the policy document provides a broad framework within which Government's youth policy would be executed. Although the policy identifies a number of action plans and activities, it is not a series of programmes but a flexible and dynamic process of interaction between government and civil society from which further strategies, programmes, activities and projects would emerge. It is also a process which places youth at the forefront of policy development and policy implementation since it advocates a culturally relevant participatory model. It is an approach which emphasizes youth empowerment while recognizing Government's responsibility to create a facilitative framework and to provide in the appropriate circumstances support, especially where such support would lead to the achievement of Vision 2020. Moreover, the policy envisages a dynamic relationship among youth and Youth organizations; the Government and Civil society especially youth serving organizations.





2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

An important factor in the shaping of any policy is the approach or conceptual framework adopted by the planners and policy makers. This conceptual framework therefore, sets the main parameters for understanding and achieving the strategic visioning, goal direction, objectives and actions that would lead to the vision of empowered young people who are able to make informed choices so that they can lead meaningful enjoyable lives and contribute to the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago and the achievement of first world status by 2020.

One must therefore consider that in the area of social policy development, one can choose from a range of policy approaches. The policy can be seen as a welfare process so that it may mean providing for the individual needs of the disadvantaged. This approach may also be linked to what is defined as social philanthropy where those who believe that they are better off make provision for the disadvantaged or attempt to change the values of the disadvantaged.

Another approach may be the casework or social work model where emphasis is placed on transformation of individual circumstances of distress and disadvantage. Furthermore, others have emphasised the treatment of the system for the delivery of services. Such an approach emphasises the social administrative process. However, in contemporary times social policy experts have emphasised the developmental approach, which is viewed more as the social developmental approach.



The approach by the National Youth Policy Task Force appointed to advise on the policy has been decidedly social developmental. Midgley (1995) asserts and the Task force agrees that the social development approach differs from social philanthropy, social work and social administration. Unlike those approaches the social development approach does not deal with individuals either with providing them with goods or services or by treating or rehabilitating them.

According to Midgley it focuses on the community or society and on wider social processes and structures. It is comprehensive and universalistic, promoting not only programmes to deal with the needy but with the development of a comprehensive process to enhance the well being of the total population. It involves a process of growth and transformation as it seeks to link social and economic development efforts. One would find this approach inherent in the youth policy that is being recommended.

For many experts in social policy development, as indeed the youth policy is, one can develop the policy as a programme, which will mean a set of procedures and activities. It can be a method which means a way of working so that the overall goal is attained. It may be a movement, that is a crusade, a cause to which people become committed or it may be a process, a continuous dynamic mechanism whereby people move from being acted upon to being actors, moving from a state where few participate to one in which many or most participate. The process approach is the approach which found favour with the National Youth Policy Task Force and the youths of Trinidad & Tobago.

As a result it is being argued here that successful policy development can only occur if the process places at the centre of its operation, the human factor. Moreover, if the human factor is at the centre of the process greater emphasis would be placed on participation of youths in policy formulation, development and implementation. Indeed the central process and theme of this policy is participation.



Participation, according to Midgley (1986), provides a forum for people to become actively involved in the development process. The rationale being that once there is a sense of ownership, some degree of social cohesion develops and this in turn accelerates social and economic growth which together sum sustainable development. Furthermore, an examination of the traditional lifestyles of Trinidad and Tobago suggests that the population has always incorporated community participation and social cohesion as strategies for development.

Consequently it is suggested that the goals for youth development, national sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago, and the attainment of Vision 2020 can only be achieved through the participation of youth in a process that incorporates, according to Giddens (1998), a third way, the democratising of democracy. Thus one can argue that an imperative of the future is the involvement of youth in the shaping of their own destiny. Accordingly, Chambers (1997) argues that people are expert at resolving their own problematic situations and therefore their empowerment must involve their participation. However, young people would agree that guidance must be provided if the participatory process is to be iterative and educative.

But one should note that participation can be used in various senses. Chambers (cited in Nelson and Wright 1995) argues that firstly, participation can be used as a cosmetic label to make whatever is proposed appear good. Secondly, it can be utilised as a co-opting practice to mobilise local labour and reduce costs and thirdly, it can be used to describe an empowering process which enables local people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence and to make their own decisions. As Chambers puts it, "this means that 'we' participate in 'their' project, not 'they, in 'ours' ". It is in this third sense participation is meant and promoted as a development process for the development of a national youth policy of the youth of Trinidad and Tobago and a process to inform the institutional strengthening activities of the Youth Division which will be responsible for directing most of the processes aimed at promoting youth development and consequently the related process of national sustainable development and achievement of first world status by 2020.



Nevertheless participatory development is challenging and difficult. Guijt and Shah (1998) suggest that participatory development initiatives are difficult to implement because of the diversity and complexity of community dynamics. They have argued that community cohesion and consequently participation are not easily achieved when one considers the issues of age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion and gender. They emphasise that participation can be an elusive goal which can only be understood when it is recognised that participation concerns shifts in the power structure. Thus in a plural society such as Trinidad and Tobago participation becomes a very challenging activity.

Nelson and Wright (1995) argue that one needs to distinguish participation as a means from participation as an end. In the developmental context participation concerns the interaction within communities, between people and institutions as well as within the particular structures of those organisations and can only be defined in a contextual manner. This has implications for the future relationship between the main stakeholders in the process, youth and the Youth Division of the Ministry of Sport & Youth Affairs. This process of participation and indeed empowerment connotes a power which Hartsock (cited in Nelson and Wright, 1995) describes as a creative energy which generates power which can serve as a motivational factor.

The process encourages collective action and assists in building social capital since hitherto, marginalized groups gain renewed confidence in their abilities. Rowlands (cited in Nelson and Wright 1995) notes that this has a psychological effect on the individual as well as assists in developing their negotiation skills individually and collectively.

As noted earlier, the Task Force reported that in approaching the task of developing a participatory methodology, it placed great emphasis on the use of the youth's and the people's culture as a developmental imperative and mechanism for analysis and popular participation, using it as a driving process which, not only enhanced the



policy imperatives themselves but, also served as the central means of empowerment of the youths as they made, shaped and developed strategies to implement their policy.

The methodology sought to allow young people in their communities and organisations to control their development destiny. It can be described as a deep process of youth empowerment, of youth understanding the tools of political action, of social and economic transformation and indeed it represented a story of the raw power of youth.

The Task Force utilised the methodology of participation. It recognised that it could be used not only as a mechanism to assist in the formulation of the National Youth Policy but also as a mechanism which could be used in the on going process of youth development and as a means of ensuring the effective participation of youth in the process of transformation and development.

Thus the participatory methodology could be the key to an appropriate process to reach most of the young people and to rebuild community life and traditional human relationships which have been shattered by industrialisation, urbanisation, colonialism, proletarianisation and more recently, the internationalisation of capital (globalisation) and, furthermore, the breakdown of the dominant paradigms of socialisation on the one hand and market-driven capitalism on the other.

Therefore, the policy initiatives articulated point to the need to focus emphasis on a process of transition, of transformation and of empowerment of youth.

As indicated earlier the emphasis is on the process. To extend its meaning further, the 'process' approach will see the policy not as a series of programmes and projects but an articulation of dynamic change mechanisms which recognise difficulty, conflict, struggle and eventual successful sustainability.

'Transition' recognises a process leading to an alternative future for the youth institutions, programmes, the youths themselves and the communities.

'Transformation' is seen as a process of transition not only in quantitative or linear improvement but a substantial and qualitative shift in the political, economic, social and cultural relations among youth, government and civil society.

'Empowerment', refers both to a method of change and to a definition of new relations in which youth will be in charge of their destiny as they shape the form and content of the institutions, programmes, projects and processes.

In the result the policy identifies a number of key themes to highlight its strategic goals and direction.

KEY THEMES

The key themes being reflected in the following goals, objectives, strategies and action plans that have been developed are:

- · RESEARCH
- · PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION
- . TARGETING OF 'AT RISK' YOUTH
- RESOURCE ALLOCATION
- ACTION
- IMPLEMENTATION
- TRANSFORMATION
- EMPOWERMENT

3. THE CURRENT YOUTH SITUATION IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The population of Trinidad and Tobago is very diverse. As a result ethnicity and race play a significant role in the socio-economic and political situation of youth in the country. According to the 1990 Census Report Afro-Trinidad descendants constitute 37.1% of the Youth population while Indo-Trinidad Youth constitute 42.8%. Mixed heritage constitute some 17.9%. In Tobago the youth population is predominantly of African descent and accounts for 90% of the resident Tobago youth population.

The diversity of ethnicity is further complicated by diversity in religion. Although there is a significant Hindu Youth population of 25.5% and an ever-growing Muslim population of 5.6% the youth population is primarily Christian in orientation with Roman Catholics accounting for 28.6%. There is also a growing evangelical movement and increases in the followers of the Spiritual Baptist and Orisha. Thus a Youth policy although recognising a demand for the inculcation of spirituality and morality in youth, must be sensitive to the religious orientation and diversity of the religion of youth.

Although, there has been a call for greater attention to be paid to the situation of rural youth, the urban centres of Trinidad account for the vast majority of youth in Trinidad and Tobago. Thus St. George accounts for 34.5%. Victoria 17.9% and Caroni 15.6%. However both Victoria and Caroni tend to be more rural than urban. The other counties and Tobago account in each case for 5% or less of the youth population. This distribution has significance for the distribution of resources for the development of youth. Nevertheless, the situation of rural youth and Tobago must not be ignored simply because there is greater density of population in the urban or semi-urban centres.



The mix of diversity in ethnicity, religion and population density has impacted on family formation, structure and attitudes. One can identify different approaches to parenting, child rearing and socialization which although one may call it distinctively of Trinidad and Tobago there is evidence of certain individual cultural nuances which one must consider as one shapes a Youth Policy. Thus in Trinidad and Tobago one can find the nuclear family; common-law relationships, extended family relationships, visiting family relationships, single parent families and indeed the very relevant 'barrel' families which developed as a result of the migratory patterns of the people.

The various forms have caused a tremendous socio-economic strain on the society within the last two to three decades of Trinidad and Tobago's development cycle. Increasing poverty, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and the Impact of the Direct TV and Cable cultures on young people and families have also given rise to the breakdown of treasured family values and traditions with consequential issues such as domestic violence, child abuse and crime. Additionally challenging would be issues related to child labour, street children and the persistent problem of adolescent pregnancy. Moreover, there is concern about the increasing rate of young persons with physical and mental disabilities.

The National Youth Policy Task Force's report on the profile of youth in Trinidad and Tobago outlines the statistical significance of these issues. In referring to health issues the report points out that motor vehicle accidents and AIDS account for the most deaths among young people in the age group 25 to 35. AIDS has also accounted for increases in Orphan children. It should also be noted that young people in the age group 15 – 29 account for 20,000 of the reported cases of HIV/AIDS (UN AIDS World Report 2002). Additionally the Task Force report states that young people in the age group 14-16 are active participants in criminal activity. Thus crime and violence become serious challenges for the youth policy.





The issue of gender looms high as one discusses the situation of youth in Trinidad and Tobago. It should be noted that historically in Trinidad and Tobago males and females have been socialized to assume certain gender specific roles. However, in contemporary times and more particularly with the upsurge of feminist ideology these traditional gender – specific roles have been revolutionized. Nevertheless gender discrimination is an issue which is as much a youth issue as an adult issue. It has also given rise to a notion that whereas young women have become more assertive and successful in roles that were hitherto the province of men there is not a corresponding progressive and dynamic response from males. Indeed, it is argued that males especially young males have become under achievers and are at risk.

The above issues have been complicated by the difficulties faced by young persons with disabilities, by children and youth in institutions, by rural youth, by Tobago youth, by HIV positive youth, by young drug addicts and by youth offenders. As a result, one can argue although the contemporary approach to youth policy development speaks of universal and integrated approaches these special interest groups must be targeted in very direct ways to treat some endemic and persistent problems.

Furthermore, as one explores the situation of the contemporary Trinidad and Tobago youth one must highlight that the legal framework developed to address youth is distinctively colonial and oppressive in orientation. As a result there were calls for a review of laws related to children, young persons, family and education. The initiative of the government to develop a Children's Authority, a New Family Court Act and legislation related to the administration of institutions for the care and development of children and youth were applauded but young people clamoured for an opportunity to participate in the process of development of these new laws.



As one examines all of the above factors one must also consider whether there is sufficient opportunity in the society for young people to explore their creative and dynamic potential in sports, culture and other recreational activities?

The view has been expressed by young people that there is not enough opportunity for youth participation in outdoor recreational activities. There has developed in Trinidad and Tobago a youth culture that directs and is directed by the radio DJ and our Caribbean kin, the Jamaican 'dub' culture but there is some interest in creative activities such as participation in music, drama and dance. Youths are also involved in clubs/discos, malls and video arcades as leisure centres. Indeed some adults view their participation in these activities as addictive and just as deleterious as drug addiction. Although it is argued that young people listen to radio more than they watch television one cannot ignore the

Tobago Youth.

It has been argued that there may be a difficulty to identify a distinctively Trinidad and Tobago Youth – what exists is perhaps a hybrid of North America and Jamaica in style, fashion and attitude – Where has the Trinidad and Tobago 'saga-boy' gone? Where is 'tan tan'? Is this development a function of parenting? Is it globalisation or is it the dominance of the all intrusive and pervasive US culture or the equally as powerful kindred Jamaican cultural form. Additionally a significant number of young people are striving for the Indian in them or the African in them through their music, dress and indeed ancestral traditions and art forms. A significant challenge therefore is the management of cultural diversity without destroying the fundamental

impact of television on the values and attitudes of Trinidad and

agement of cultural diversity without destroying the fundamental cultural form that represents the Trinidad and Tobagoness in Youth.

The above issues have been conditioned by other issues such as the social strata of Trinidad and Tobago. Social strata to a very large extent determine one's access to resources and services in the society. In Trinidad and Tobago certain of our young people are disadvantaged because of their location in the social structure with such location determined inter alia by historical antecedents, financial standing or status of one's family, education, ethnic or religious background and or community of residence.

Additionally, one's location may be determined by one's own definition of reality. One's sense of location may also determine one's values and attitudes. Thus to understand issues of youth one may need to analyze them in the context of the wider issues of social stratification in Trinidad and Tobago. Some youth believe that they are doomed to distress because of their social standing and residence. Furthermore, some young people believe that the society has achieved independence but it is not free. For young people, the halo of colonialism and imperialism looms large.

As one considers the situational analysis of youth in Trinidad and Tobago, one cannot ignore the phenomenon of 'at risk' youth.

YOUTH AT RISK

Tony Proscio (2000) stated: In Other Words that **'at risk'** generally is the polite euphemism for "headed into trouble". Thus for him **'at risk'** "describes a student with socio-economic challenges such as poverty or teen pregnancy, which may place (the student) at a disadvantage in achieving academic, social or career goals. Such students are deemed 'at risk' of failing, dropping out, or "falling through the cracks".

The International Child and Youth Care Network, in its publication, Today of 24th August, 2001 explored whether there could be a better definition of the concept of 'at risk' youth. The author suggested that maybe we are the ones that put youth at risk. As a result when one examines the traditional definition of at risk meaning failing in some major task that is necessary to assure a happy productive life one may suggest a better definition of youth 'at risk' as being "youths who are at risk of being failed by one or more adults or adult – driven system or institution".

The National Human Development Report of Trinidad and Tobago describes "youth at risk" in Trinidad and Tobago as youth "being marginalized becoming disenchanted and not participating or benefiting from expanding opportunities despite the fact that Trinidad and Tobago's economic fundamentals appear to be sound and the country's economic pros-



This report highlights five critical areas of concern: Education, Health, Employment, Crime and Justice.

On the other hand the World Bank report, Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion (2000) defines "at risk youth" as "youth who face exceptional challenges in the traditional venues of socialization, principally, the family, community, school and workplace".

The report contends that:

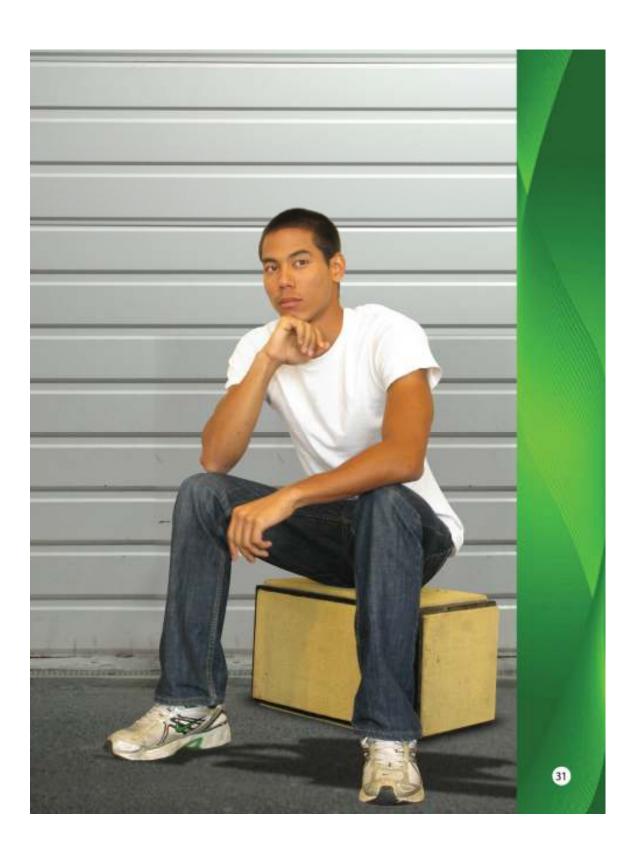
"Trinidad and Tobago has approximately 400,000 youths, aged 10-24 which account for about 30% of the population. A situational analysis reveals that many youths in Trinidad and Tobago are excluded from the country's social and economic development and live in poverty and neighbourhood environments with few resources. A large number of children experience abuse and neglect, and some lose family support altogether, ending up as wards of the state in the child protective services system. These factors are compounded by an education system that limits access and a labour market factors limited employment opportunities. These restrictions on adolescents' prospects for the future contribute to higher manifestations of risk behaviour and associated outcomes, such as youth crime, often involving trafficking and drug use, early sexual initiation and pregnancy".

The report also argues that:

"Historically, research and policy dealing with youth issues have focused mainly on negative outcomes of individuals; but this perspective has changed to incorporate the broader context of youth development at the social, institutional and structural levels. The focus on single issues such as school dropout, youth crime, and early pregnancy led to separate interventions that intended primarily to avoid repetition of the event, but in treating the symptoms, they left causes unattended. More recently, research has shown that a series of antecedent behaviour underlies the negative outcomes, which are also interrelated."







SOCIAL (FAMILY, HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY)

- · Low family socio-economic status, poverty
- · Reduced support-family structure
- · Abuse and neglect

INSTITUTIONAL (FORMAL AND INFORMAL)

- · Poor access to education and training
- · Low quality education
- · Neighbourhood with low social capital
- · Contact with child protective services

STRUCTURAL (POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL STRUCTURES)

- · General poor economic and social conditions
- · Few employment opportunities
- · Inadequate youth policy and legislation
- · Stigma of being a poor youth

HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS (activities that have potential for individual or social harm).

- · Use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol
- · Early sexual activity and unprotected intercourse
- Association with delinquent peers, criminal adults
- Intrafamilial violence
- · Running away from home
- · High absence from school

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES (manifestations of consequences of risk behaviour):

- · Addiction to drugs, alcohol, with associated health problems
- Early Pregnancy
- · Poor pregnancy outcomes and unsafe abortion
- Sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS
- · Involvement in crime (often drug trafficking)
- · School dropouts
- · Premature entry into the labour market (Child Labour)

The policy therefore has the challenge to develop strategies to address risk antecedents in the society not on the basis of the pathology of youth but on the basis of the creation of proactive and developmental strategies to deal with youth at every level, the family, the school, institutions and the community.

Nevertheless, in the context of the current situation, the following priority groups should be targeted:

- Young people with disabilities
- Children and young people living in institutions
- · Rural young men and women
- · Unemployed young men and women
- · Out of school young women and men
- · Young people in schools
- Street Children
- Young men and women who are HIV positive
- Young drug addicts
- Young offenders
- . Young men and women in the informal sector.

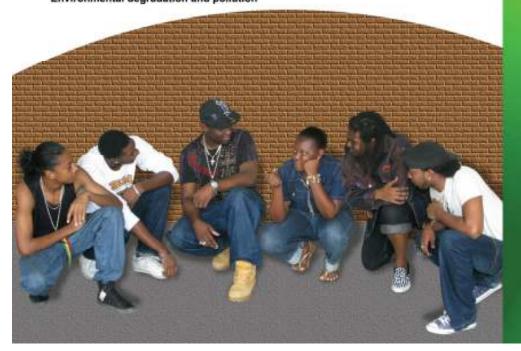
Furthermore, issues for major intervention are:

- Poverty too many young people are growing up in poverty (the culture of poverty syndrome)
- Youth in Institutions
- Education
- · Health
- · Employment and Employability
- · Family (parenting skills)

Although the above issues and focal points have been identified under 'at risk' they may generally reflect issues and points of intervention as one addresses the main matters related to youth development in Trinidad and Tobago.

Consequently, the following areas for intervention as highlighted by youths with whom the task force interacted also form part of the issues for direct focal attention:

Unemployment and enforced leisure
Spread of diseases
HIV/AIDS
Drugs
Domestic Violence/Abuse
Lack of Discipline among young people
Family Breakdown/Inadequate parenting
Delinquency
Negative peer pressure
Promiscuity and Teenage Pregnancy
Violence and crime
Poor communication between youth and the rest of society
Lack of vision/direction
Environmental degradation and pollution



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Lack of spirituality
Absence of role models
Poor education and education opportunities
Community disintegration
Lack of motivation among young people
Insufficient sporting/recreational facilities
Limited/no access to computers (technological awareness and exposure)
Low self- esteem
Double standards in society
Hopelessness and alienation

The Youth Policy planners and implementers must therefore respond in a creative way to the myriad of issues that are being raised.

Furthermore, as one attempts to search for creative ways one cannot ignore the richness of the Trinidad and Tobago culture and its potential to aid in the development process. But of what does one speak when one refers to culture and more specifically, Trinidad and Tobago culture?

Culture has been variously defined. However, an acceptable definition is "the set of key values, beliefs, understanding and norms that identify members of a group". Trinidad and Tobago's culture, that Trinidad and Tobagoness of which one can speak has been influenced by a variety of streams out of Europe, Africa and Asia. David Rudder (1999) in one of his calypsos, 'The Ganges and the Nile' puts it this way:

Many rivers flow to this naked isle
bringing fear and pain but also a brand new style
and of all these rivers that shaped this land
two mighty ones moved like a sculptor's hand
and today those hands across the land but they still landscaping ...
come see how we moving watch how we grooving
see how we step in style
one lovely nation under a groove
the Ganges come meet the Nile'

One's culture is always under threat of penetration from abroad. Trinidad and Tobago's youth, as argued above, are vulnerable in the face of the dominant North American culture as received every day through cable/direct television, radio and the various media. The North American culture aided by our Jamaican 'blood' continues to shape youth's values, norms, music, dance, fashion and life style. Nevertheless, there are still strong cultural elements in Trinidad and Tobago that have been sustained and have survived. These cultural elements must be encouraged as one articulates and develops a national youth policy. In other words the policy strategy must include a cultural dimension.

De Cuellar et al (1995, 1996) point out that the inclusion of a culture perspective in the developmental process involves the acknowledgement of beliefs, ideas, mores, values and customs. It includes the visual and performing arts and influences every aspect of endeavour and institutions. These range from the family including children and youth, the legislature, religion, productive capacity and capability, leadership and governance. Culture is the puise and essence of a nation's heartbeat, it shapes the human experience and determines a community's response. It influences the nature of social interaction at the individual and institutional levels. [See also Gomes (1999]. No where is this more evident than among a nation's youth. Kleymeyer (1994) believes that culture is the foundation upon which equitable and sustainable development is built. Thus if culture is ignored, one cannot speak of human development [Tucker (1997).

It is therefore suggested that the diversity of Trinidad and Tobago's culture offers an opportunity of hope which can be utilized as an effective developmental tool. In sum the culture can be used as a medium to articulate transformation and development.

As a result one would find in the following policy, goals, objectives implementation strategies and action plans, an underlying principle, which calls for the utilization of culture as a participatory tool and process in aid of transformation, change, development and empowerment.



4. YOUTH POLICY GOALS OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago pledges its commitment to create the social, economic, legal and political framework, to empower young people so that they would be able to make informed choices to lead meaningful, enjoyable lives and contribute to the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago and allow the realization of Vision 2020.

The policy goals reflect an emphasis on youth as individuals, on the environmental structures and on the systems and institutions which impact on youth. In sum the policy says YES to youth as being valuable and worthy of investment by the national community.

The policy goals accompanied by objectives and strategies are as follows:

GOALS ONE

An empowered young person with positive values who can use acquired knowledge and skills to make informed choices while meaningfully participating in problem solving and decision making at family, community and national levels.

This goal speaks to the individual youth who should be healthy, knowledgeable, skilled with positive values and with a sense of civic responsibility so that he is motivated to be self - actualised.



OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objective 1

Promotion, adoption and acceptance of positive values such as discipline, responsibility, patriotism, high self-esteem.

Strategy

 To expand and enhance existing programmes of Community Based Organisations (C.B.O.'s), Non- Governmental Organisations (N.G.O.'s) and other Youth Serving Organisations such as uniformed groups, youth clubs, and councils in the school system and in local communities.

Objective 2

Attainment of fulfilling careers cognisant of the need to be flexible and multi-skilled.

Strategy:

- Re engineering of the education system in order to facilitate and develop a needs based school curriculum.
- Strengthening and expansion of employment agencies as they relate to Youth employment.

Objective 3

Effective leadership development to ensure enhanced leadership among young people.

Strategy:

- Development of accredited, recognized, experience based capacity building training projects/ programmes for leadership.
- . Development of avenues for sustained use of leadership skills and capacities.

Objective 4

To ensure that young people acquire appropriate negotiating, problem solving and other life skills.

Strategy:

- Development of Projects/ Programmes/ processes to enhance existing problem solving, negotiating, anger and conflict management skills.
- Development of Projects/ programmes to enhance social, language and communication skills of young people.

Objective 5

To ensure that youth acquire proper language, communication and social skills to interact with others in both local and international communities.



Strategy:

- Develop projects/ programmes which would encourage youth to appreciate diversity due to differences in ethnicity, skin colour, gender, disability, language and geography.
- Culture- based processes and projects to enhance social and communication skills of youth.
- . Develop projects to promote gender awareness and equity.

Objective 6

Full utilisation of positive avenues for relaxation and healthy lifestyles.

- Development of collaborative links, processes and a socio-cultural environment that will provide alternatives to substance abuse and ensure substance demand reduction.
- Intensification of projects and processes to continue to examine, discuss and disseminate information on human sexuality and life style diseases.
- Promotion and encouragement of participation in sports, culture and other healthy and positive, recreational activities.

GOAL TWO

An enabling environment that will facilitate youth development.

This goal speaks to Government and Civil Society so shaping the environment that it would support the individual efforts of youth to be developed and empowered.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objective 1

Creation of a supportive legal and governmental framework sensitive to the needs of youth.

Strategy:

- Re engineering of the Youth Service Delivery System to ensure that children, youth and youth leaders participate in the process and programme implementation activities of the agencies responsible for Sport and Youth.
- · Review, revise and harmonise legislation and policies relating to children and youth.
- Draft and enforce laws to ensure that children and young people enjoy the protection and care of their parents, adults, civil society and the state.
- To ensure that policemen, prison officers, other members of the protective services and judicial officers are sensitive to the needs and rights of the children, youth and young offenders.

Objective 2

Promotion of the development of the socio-economic infrastructure and services to facilitate and sustain quality family life.

- Remodelling of services to ensure that their processes are flexible to meet the needs of children and youth with respect to public assistance and other grants, and to further provide for their enhanced rehabilitation and socio – economic development.
- Development of decentralised services for children and youth at the level of the village and the local community.
- Development of projects to increase the social and economic care-giving capacity and standards of care-giving institutions in the society: e.g. halfway houses, aftercare facilities, community based housing for the homeless and care for children and youth in need of care and protection.
- · Improved training of professionals in the social care sector.
- Improved monitoring and management of children and youth institutions.
- · Improved standards for staff of the social care sector.

Removal of the inequalities within the socio-economic system so that the primary needs of young people are met.

Strategy:

- · Accessibility of services to all.
- Creation of the awareness of structural and other inequalities within the socioeconomic environment, which deny young people opportunities to have their needs fulfilled.
- Development of programmes to remove the stigmatisation directed against young people of stereotyped communities.

Objective 4

Re-engineering of the education system, including the infrastructure, so that education becomes more accessible to all young persons regardless of geographical location, gender, class, disability, race, ethnicity, or religion, from pre-primary to tertiary levels.

- · Change in the system, structure and process of education.
- · Intensification of technology- based approaches to learning and skills development.
- · Greater use of culture- based processes for learning and skills development.



- · Construction of more tertiary level educational institutions in rural areas and in Tobago.
- Development of a national human resource development strategy linked to Vision 2020 in Trinidad and Tobago.

Promotion and development of mechanisms to facilitate the development and strengthening of the Trinidad and Tobago cultural identity among young people.

Strategy:

- Enhancement of processes and mechanisms that promote cultural awareness.
- Development of processes and projects to promote an appreciation of the history of Trinidad and Tobago.
- · National pride activities and projects.

Objective 6

Promotion of a society of peace, security, equality, and good governance.

Strategy:

- . Development of processes and projects that promote national tolerance and unity.
- · Establishment of mechanisms and systems to ensure accountability and transparency.

Objective 7

Creation of facilities and mechanisms to promote the development of healthy life styles for young people.

Strategy:

- Development of a youth health policy.
- Development of projects and processes to promote a culture of wellness and fitness in children and youth.
- · Promotion of positive health practices through national youth health programmes.
- Intensification of programmes to deal with HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

Objective 8

Re-engineering of health services to ensure improved and youth friendly health care sensitive to the needs of children and youth.

- · Improved capacity of delivery personnel.
- Provision of efficient and youth friendly health service delivery especially as it impacts on children and youth.
- Development of systems to provide for greater confidentiality within the health sector.

Development of the facilitative mechanisms and framework to ensure that young people participate in and contribute to all aspects of national development.

Strategy:

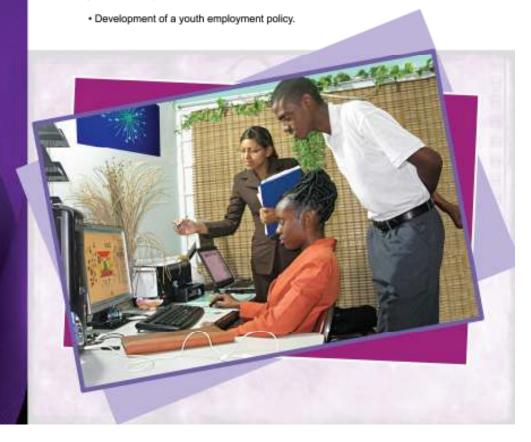
- Create the institutional framework to ensure that there is a youth voice or lobby in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Create various mechanisms, which would lend support and encouragement to youth, youth organisations and youth leaders and to ensure that youth lead the process of youth development.
- Provision of opportunities and fora for youth to express their opinions on matters of national concern.

Objective 10

Creation of mechanisms to increase the level of youth employment and employability.

Strategy:

 Strengthening of the institutional framework for the conduct of periodic labour market surveys to ensure that there is a proper match between skill acquisition and job market requirements.

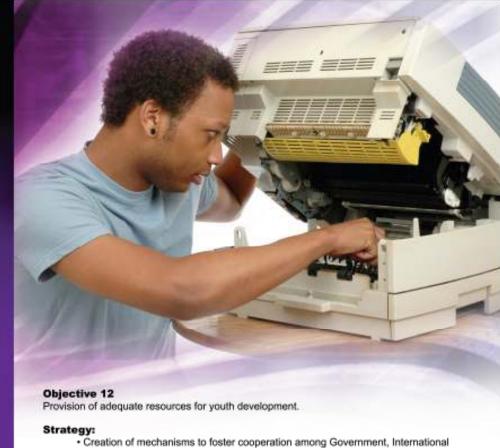


- Provision of the business and economic infrastructure to attract greater investment and enhanced opportunities for youth employment.
- Diversification of the economy toward the development of the informal sector with emphasis on non-traditional areas of employment.
- Creation of mechanisms which would ensure that youth are equipped with the necessary social, life and technical skills for the job market.
- The promotion of culture and sport as mechanisms for employment and income generation.
- Ensure that private and public sector organisations provide opportunities for young people to obtain employment-related education and training.
- Ensure that young people with disabilities are employable and employed

Enhancement and maintenance of facilities for the cultural, sporting and recreational development of youth.

- Conduct of a needs assessment for the provision of cultural, sporting and recreational facilities in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Provision of adequate resources to enhance and maintain cultural, sporting and recreational facilities.





- Creation of mechanisms to foster cooperation among Government, International Agencies, the private sector and Civil Society towards funding for youth development.
- . Ensure that youth projects are funded.
- . Ensure that funding allocated to the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs is appropriate for the realisation of the goals and objectives defined in the youth policy.

Promotion of life long learning and self development

- . Develop the capacity of institutions and other infrastructure so that young people especially out of school youth and dropouts could continue life-long education and self-development.
- · Provide adequate support systems to ensure that young people especially those of low- income families 'at risk youth' especially youth with disabilities can access training opportunities provided to them.
- · Create a national awareness of the benefits of lifelong learning.

Development and promotion of systems and activities that would allow youth to know, understand and appreciate themselves as members of a regional and global community

Strategy

- Promote a comprehensive system to disseminate information on human rights, world and regional (Caribbean and Latin American) education.
- · Promote opportunities for youth to interact with youth of the region and the world.
- Develop activities that would promote exchanges of information, removal of linguistic and other barriers between youth of the Trinidad and Tobago and Youth of the world especially the Caricom.
- Develop programmes to allow youth to understand the implications of Globalisation and their responsibility in respect of international trade and Trinidad and Tobago's competitiveness.

GOAL THREE

Support for institutions and systems such as the family, the community, the school and religious and other organizations, which strengthen and sustain youth development.

This goal speaks to the making of efforts by the society to support the critical institution of the family, the community and schools in efforts to promote youth development and for these institutions to reinvent themselves to be more effective.



OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objective 1

Ensure that parents are aware that they are responsible and accountable for the early socialization of the child and aid them in the task of responsible parenting and child rearing.

Strategy:

- . Enhancement of community based support to parents in parenting and child-rearing.
- Partnership building between young parents and senior citizens, retirees and the elderly as aids in the development of parental skills.
- · School interventions to assist in parenting and child- rearing.
- Organisation and guidance of teenaged and youth parents.

Objective 2

Ensure that there are adequate and flexible systems to promote the social, economic and cultural development of the family as a support system for youth.

Strategy:

- Development of programmes and activities to promote family life and cohesion.
- · Strengthening of the systems that provide economic support to family life.
- Development of projects to increase the social and economic care-giving capacity in the society.
- · Improved monitoring and management of children and youth in homes and institutions.

Objective 3

Encourage religious bodies to continue to play an active role nationally, in instilling moral and spiritual values in the youth and the national community.

Strategy:

- Creation of groups by various religious bodies so that youth have fora to address issues that may be affecting them.
- Development of support systems and processes to promote the maintenance and transference of moral and spiritual values from adult to youth, youth to youth and adult to adult.
- Provision of support to religious and other bodies involved in projects to promote the spiritual and moral development of youth.

Objective 4

Create systems, and develop processes and services to sensitise the community about the basic needs and rights of the child and young persons.

Strategy

Projects to ensure education and understanding of the Rights and Responsibilities of children and youth

Encourage and support communities and civil society organisations to formulate appropriate processes, programmes and projects to treat with young offenders and other children and youth who are in need of care, protection and development or who may otherwise be at risk.

Strategy:

- . Develop mechanisms to support the 'at risk' youth.
- · Continuous and improved training of care- givers in the social care sector.
- · Creation of standards for the institutions and staff of the social care sector.
- · Enhanced and improved rehabilitative capacity of institutions for young offenders.

Objective 6

Provision of greater recognition and support by the state to civil society organisations such as the National Youth Council to ensure the safety, welfare and development of children and youth.

- Immediate incorporation by an Act of Parliament of the National Youth Council.
- Development of financial and administrative support systems for the National Youth Council and other community based organisations.

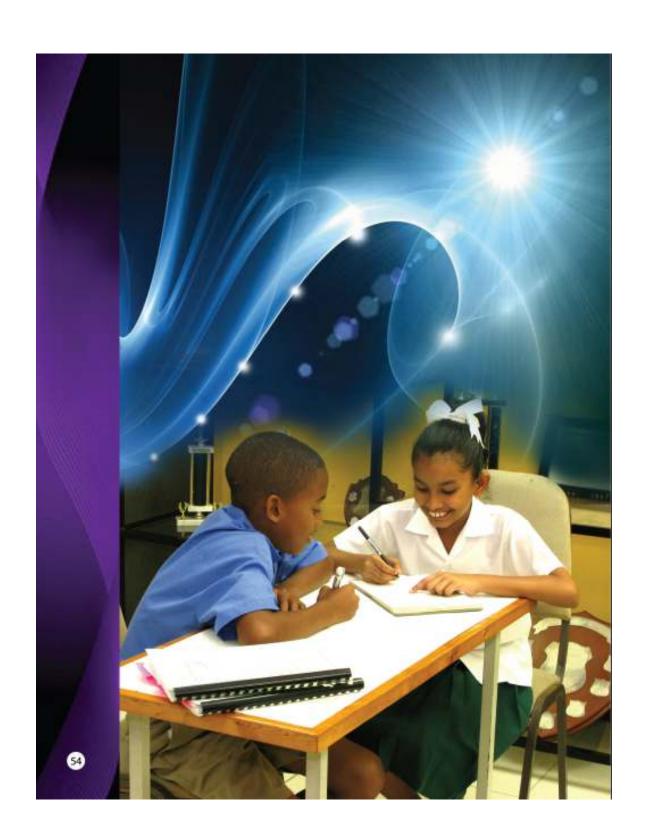


- · Greater visible partnership between the State and the National Youth Council.
- Enhancement of tax and other incentives for private sector organisations in order to promote investment in the National Youth Council and other community based organisations which serve youth.

Ensure that the school as a community-based institution for learning becomes more creative in the transmission of knowledge and skills and in the shaping of the values of children and youth.

- Development of systems and processes to enhance the capacity of the teacher to be more creative and child – sensitive.
- The school as a building must be designed and used as an institution of total community involvement and learning especially in the service of children and youth.
- Development of systems and processes to integrate the school and community as a network for the promotion of positive values in children and youth.
- · Establishment of a mentoring programme in schools and youth organisations.



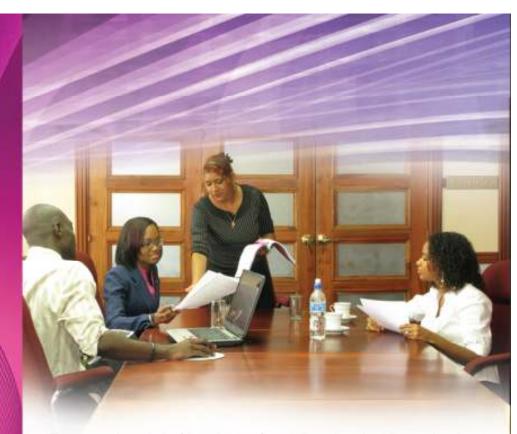


Action Planning for Youth Development









The scope and magnitude of the task to transform youth, youth service delivery and youth development is enormous. The strategies and actions must be creative, flexible and dynamic. They also demand the need for a high degree of collaboration mainly among the Ministries of Education, Health, Gender Affairs, Community Development, Culture and Tourism, Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, Social Development, the Tobago House of Assembly and the Municipal and Regional Corporations.

The success of this policy is dependent on the level of cooperation and collaboration between Government agencies and Civil Society. Business involvement in the programmes, projects and policies must be nurtured and encouraged. There is also a need for active participation by trade unions, women's organizations, community and other youth serving bodies. Youth development is a national issue requiring the involvement and support of the national community.

The policy in its overall strategic visioning and direction puts children and youth in the forefront of their own development. It therefore places great emphasis on youth empowerment and on the development of a National Youth Council while strengthening the role of existing youth councils such as the Trinidad Youth Council and the Tobago Youth Council.

Youth leaders would be specially motivated and encouraged to lead the implementation process at the village, regional and national levels. They would be expected to create, develop and execute their own programmes and projects.

Government would generally serve as the facilitator of change and transformation to structure the enabling environment so as to permit youth to prosper and flourish.

Government would be expected to re-engineer the education system and to develop the socio-economic, legal and political infrastructure to promote participation, social inclusion and empowerment.

Government would also be required to examine the budgetary allocation for youth development. There must be adequate and appropriate resource allocation for youth development.

A major and significant issue in the process of transformation is the creation of a more efficient and effective Youth Service Delivery System. What is the best administrative and implementation mechanism to serve the needs of youth?

The Task Force believes that the objectives and strategies give rise to activities including programmes and projects, which may be short-term, medium or long term, dependent on the nature of the issue, the intervention strategy and the availability of resources.

Thus the resulting action plans must be seen as guideposts from which further actions and activities may arise. They may also give rise to specific programmes and projects as the implementing agency or agencies engage youth and the national community in a participatory and culturally relevant process of ideas development and policy implementation. The emphasis must be on inclusion, creativity, flexibility and relevance.

ACTION PLANS

The creation of a new or restructured YOUTH SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM.

(a) Purpose:

- To ensure that youth development is better organized and that youth is better served.
- · To keep youth and youth issues under continuous review
- To develop a network of collaboration among youth organizations and youthserving organizations as a major mechanism for project development and imple mentation – direct link with the National Youth Council.
- To utilize a more effective methodology for youth work the creation of a 'cadre' of both voluntary and paid youth workers. These workers aged primarily between 18 and 29 would work the streets and communities among young people to assist in project development and implementation and to serve as the channel through which the needs of youth would be identified and addressed.

These 'street workers' or 'block workers' would work alongside professional youth workers or be part of a multi-disciplinary team.

(b) Type of Organization:

Option 1: A Company such as NEDCO

Option 2: A statutory body

Option 3: A hybrid (a quasi-state corporation)

Option 4: A re-engineered or strengthened Youth Division of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs

The form and other details could be treated to further analysis by the Government in the context of its overall development policy.

Project Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

2. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND

(a) Purpose:

- To create a mechanism to pool resources to contribute to youth organizations from the village to the national community to ensure transparency and equity.
- To assist youth organizations and youth serving organizations with funds to implement their programmes and projects.
- · To act as a clearing-house for project evaluation and funding.

(b) Type or Organization:

- (i) A Trust Foundation A board comprising representatives from Government, Business, Youth-serving Organizations and the National Youth Council.
- (ii) The Fund would develop its own procedures and system for evaluating, approving and monitoring projects.
- (iii) It would also have the mandate to ensure the equitable distribution of funds for approved project proposals throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Project Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.





3. YOUTH CRIME AND VIOLENCE UNIT

(a) Purpose:

- . To research and analyse the causes and extent of youth crime and violence
- . To develop solutions for youth crime and violence
- To provide counselling and rehabilitation for young offenders and victims of youth crime and violence
- To assist young people in processes such as anger management and other alternatives to crime and violence

(b) Type of Organization:

Public service organization to be developed in the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

Project Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

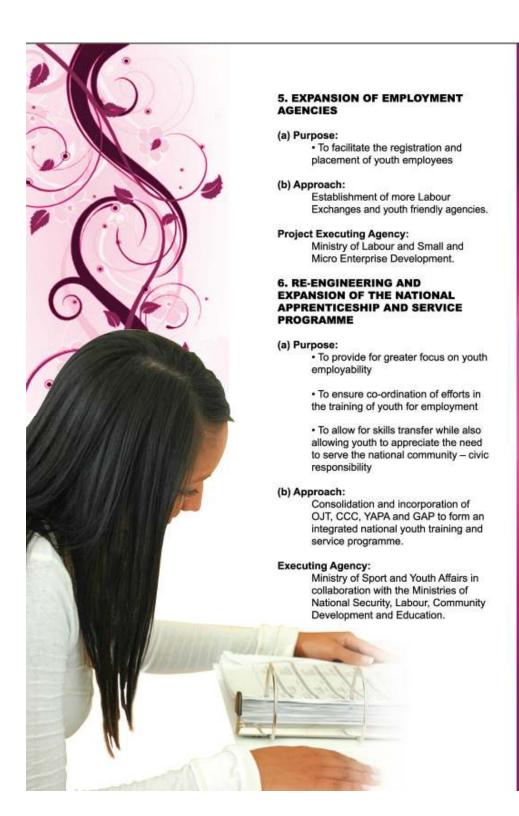
4. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY POLICY

(a) Purpose:

- · To ensure increased employability and employment of young people
- . To provide for the development of opportunities for youth employment
- To facilitate actions including fiscal and other incentives that would encourage private sector organizations to increase their level of youth employment

Project Executing Agency:

Ministry of Planning and Development in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for labour matters and Education.



7. IDENTIFICATION AND CO-ORDINATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH

(a) Purpose:

- To ensure that programmes are meeting their objectives and serving the needs of youth
- . To allow for focussed attention on youth service delivery

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

8. CREATION OF A YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

(a) Purpose:

- To provide for the leadership training needs of young people and youth leaders
- · To expose youth to training in civic responsibility, tolerance and human rights.
- To provide young people and leaders with opportunities to acquire skills related to project development and implementation.
- To assist in the institutional strengthening and capacity building of youth organizations and young people.
- · To provide opportunities to serve their communities
- · To provide for a system of mentoring at private sector and state organizations

(b) Type of Organization:

- (i) A hybrid residential camp or community-based learning organization
- (ii) Training would be delivered through a combination of theoretical and practical learning techniques - e.g. learning through participation in projects.

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

9. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

(a) Purpose:

- To ensure greater administrative and management skills
- To ensure focussed organisation and good governance
- To allow for improved capacity to deliver services to youth

(b) Approach:

- (i) Incorporation by an Act of Parliament.
- (ii) Support to ensure greater material and human resources

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

10. DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY

- (a) Purpose:

 To allow youth an opportunity to voice opinion on national, regional or international
 - . To provide a forum for youth to discuss issues related to youth
 - . To provide for a link between youth and the Government and other Parliamentary representatives.

(b) Approach:

Model Parliament

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs Ministry of Education.

11. SUPPORT TO THE YOUTH COUNCILS IN THE PROJECT eXpression "VOICE OF YOUTH"

(a) Purpose:

- . To highlight positive aspects of youth
- · To disseminate information on critical issues such as HIV/AIDS

(b) Approach:

A multi-venue concert/rally with local and international artistes, cultural youth groups, booths by youth-serving organizations.



Outcome:

- TV/Radio Programme (values shaping and redirecting)
- Youth Magazine

Executing Agency:

Trinidad Youth Council; Tobago Youth Council.

12. DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH CENTRES AND OTHER YOUTH-SERVING FACILITIES

(a) Purpose:

- To provide youth facilities in villages and regions of Trinidad and Tobago to allow for positive recreation and healthy life styles of youth
- To give "at risk" and other youth opportunities to 'hang out' or 'lime' in safe and secure places, to 'surf the Net', to study, to play games, to receive coaching, to seek and receive counselling and acquire information on youth and other civic responsibility issues.
- To provide for facilities such as community pools and other supporting facilities in stereotyped and disabled communities

(b) Approach:

Collaboration with the private sector to refurbish and construct facilities to promote healthy life styles and positive values among young people.

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.



13. LIFE SKILL AND PEER EDUCATOR PROGRAMME

(a) Purpose:

- . To provide young people with opportunities to help to educate themselves
- · To encourage a system of service to community

(b) Approach:

Co-ordination and provision of resources to existing peer-educator programmes and creation of new programmes to facilitate their expansion and development in schools and communities.

Executing Agency:

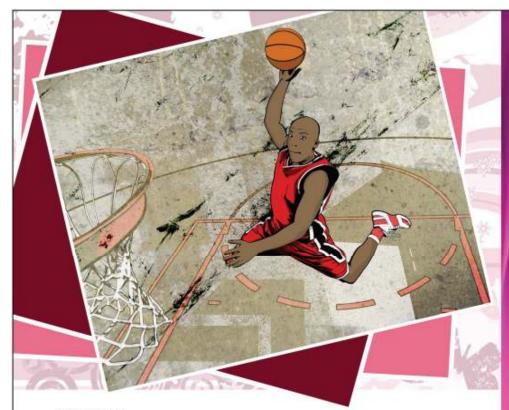
Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

14. THE BLOCK LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE FOR THE NEW GENERATION (BLING)

(a) Purpose:

- . To facilitate the gathering of information on the needs of youth
- To allow for the healthy recreation of youth in their local communities and in their natural setting.
- · To identify any psycho-social issues confronting youth
- · To identify the skills and training needs of youth
- · To assist in the employment and employability of youth
- · To allow for youth creativity and cultural expression
- · To promote high self-esteem among youth





(b) Approach:

Mobilisation of youth in their natural setting of 'small goal', 'street basket ball', cricket, netball for organisation into 'block' teams to participate in 'block' games or competitions and to simultaneously provide them with psycho-social and economic support if required.

The teams must be uniformed. Each group would organize itself either through its own efforts or through sponsorship.

During the process, youth workers, social workers and other care-giving or service delivery professionals would conduct individual and group assessment exercises to assist youth in:

- Employment
 Self-esteem
- Skills development
- · Training needs
- Counselling
- Anger management
- Health needs
- · Provide information and guidance
- · Economic needs

Executing Agency:

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs in collaboration with the Youth Councils.

15. GREATER ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO YOUTH-SERVING ORGANISATIONS

(a) Purpose:

- To ensure that uniformed groups and other groups that serve youth increase their capacity to serve youth in schools, institutions and their local communities.
- To ensure that youth-serving organizations such as the Scouts, Guides, Pathfinders, Cadets, other uniformed and non-uniformed groups acquire resources to expand their programmes to reach youth at all levels and communities in Trinidad and Tobago.

(b) Approach:

- Invitation to youth-serving organizations to make proposals for the expansion of their services.
- · Funding of specific programmes and projects related to service expansion.
- · Increased funding for institutional strengthening and capacity building.
- · Development of strategic alliances.

Outcome:

Greater outreach of services in schools, institutions and communities.



