

PAYCO OF AZANIA

PAN AFRICANIST YOUTH CONGRESS OF AZANIA (PAYCO)



NATIONAL YOUTH GOVERNANCE (MODEL) POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the National Youth Governance (model) Policy (“Policy”) is to inform the national direction on the optimum model that can effectively address challenges facing young people.

We state our case for the overhaul of the current model of youth development and the creation of the executive Ministry of Youth Affairs (“Ministry”) to replace the current model, as a response to facilitate and ensure viable, integrated, comprehensive and sustainable youth development.

Through this Policy, the Pan Africanist Youth Congress (“PAYCO”) seeks to invite and engage the government and the critical public across civil, political and economic spectrum on this matter of national importance.

As African youth we are convinced and decided that a government committed to the development of young people in particular and the country in general must appreciate and give effect to the ideals of this Policy and heed the call for the establishment of the Ministry informed by the perspective enshrined herein.

2. SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Statistics show that South Africa is essentially a youth population with a large percentage being categorized into African (80%), female (51%)¹ and youth (figures for age categories between 15-34 totaled 16 152 084 of 44, 8 million of the entire population, with the difference being shared between the age categories of below 15 years and above 34 years)². We note and appreciate fully, that youthfulness is a passing stage in the development cycle of human beings. Numerically this also translates to sector-specific proportion of the democratic make up of the political landscape in terms of nationality, gender and age. Policy makers should necessarily take these facts into consideration in their strategies.

It is a well-known fact that young African man and women face serious development challenges due to the history, legacy of apartheid and other social factors. The apartheid system excluded young African man and women from the mainstream economic participation, quality education and critical career paths as a deliberate Apartheid settler colonial strategy to deprive of and marginalize African people from economic production and engineering.

¹ Statistics South Africa: Mid-year Population Estimates, South Africa 2006

² Statistics South Africa: Census 2001

It goes without saying that to deal with this legacy of economic and educational exclusion, marginalization and deprivation, the state must make a targeted, comprehensive and concerted intervention directed at positioning youth development at the center of the national development agenda.

Furthermore the location of youth development at the center of national developmental plan is an imperative and lays a foundation for sustainable societal and leadership development across all spheres of life and society. It is a necessary condition for sustainable societal development. This foundation laid will impact on the production of future generations of leaders and the future of society in general hence the youth must shape and drive that future in a developmental context, in all its facets, economic, political , social and culturally.

The state must focus its attention, among others, on all critical aspects of life and development of young people. The key components of rounded youth development processes are education (national population level of education show that 20% has grade twelve and 8% has higher education qualification)³, civic and economic participation, health and recreation. The legacy of apartheid systemic negligent policy on the developmental requirements of the African youth in this country compound the challenges for youth development in addition to the socio-historical imperative of every society to engage in a conscious programmatic youth centered and driven developmental agenda.

3. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is important to have a preview of the nature of and the performance of the following institutions:

3.1 National Youth Commission (NYC)

Established in 1996 in terms of the National Youth Commission Act of 1996 with the aim of promoting and co-coordinating youth development, the NYC has registered a significant failure in delivering its mandate. Its mandate can best be described as lobbyist and one that has no power to generate policies, programs and implement the same. Without these essential powers and functions, we can safely argue that from the word go the NYC was inevitably bound to fail. It come as no surprise that 10 years after its formation the country still has no policy to aspire to, guide and benchmark youth development.

We note that the mediocre National Youth Policy 2000 and the National Youth

³ Statistics South Africa: Census 2001

Development Framework 2002-2007 did not go further than the corridors of the NYC. This body also lacks the capacity to co-ordinate its programs and had a remote existence from young people whom it is supposed to serve resulting in a detached and imaginary assumptions about the needs of young people.

At both strategic and operational levels this body has also been marred by serious allegations of political patronage appointments at the expense of quality expertise that resides elsewhere, other than within the ruling party, seriously compromising the organization's capacity to make any possible meaningful impact.

It must also be stated that this institution does not get sufficient funding. There has also been wide spread criticism of the outrageous remuneration of the Chairperson and the Commissioners in view of the NYC's well known damning performance track record.

3.2 Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF)

The UYF was created in 2001 with a whopping budget of 1 billion to promote youth economic participation, by mainly providing micro credit to SMME s' owned by young people. It has been clouded by accusations of nepotism in the awarding of funding vouchers.

Its major drawback is its lending policies that require recipients to pay 10% of the required funding. This is self-defeating since young people would have no such money and the Fund was created precisely to provide for the needs of those who do not meet the stringent conventional micro-credit lending criterion. It is also oblivious of the apartheid past of systemic racist economic deprivation and marginalization of the African people.

Furthermore grants applicants blacklisted as a result of unpaid National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) study loans in the face of spiraling youth unemployment (70%)⁴ would be seriously prejudiced by this policy as they may not be able to open business accounts, something the UYF require before processing a request for funding. At another level the UYF has also earned itself a rivalry in the NYC with the former being accused of usurping the 'powers and functions' of the latter. Another point souring the relations between the two bodies is that since the UYF is financially well-off than the NYC it has the resources to market itself far much better to the chagrin of the latter.

⁴ The Status of Youth Report: Produced for Umsobomvu Youth Fund by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

3.3 South African Youth Council (SAYC)

A membership based 'representative' civil society organization was established in 1997. At least this body provides a realistic opportunity for members of member organization to participate in the development of young people. This body does provide a reliable forum to highlight and make an informed assessment of the status of young people as it deals with young people from all spheres of society and walks of life. The fact that there is a joining fee may prevent many poor and rural organizations from becoming part of this broad based movement. However, it is a reasonable but not necessarily a fair democratic platform.

This organization is riddled with acts of financial mismanagement and unaccountability. As an institution this body lacks sound organizational, administrative and financial systems hence its existence has become a virtual rather than a physical phenomenon. Notwithstanding that there are no proper checks and balances to ensure accountability, the funding provided is not enough. This organization also suffer from leadership legitimacy as most of its leaders often overstay their welcome leaving the youth with little recourse to whip them into order.

3.4 Government Departments

There is virtually a youth unit in every government department dealing with youth development issues across all spheres. There has also been a vain attempt to bring together these units by the NYC. The office of the President of the Republic also boasts a youth desk resident in the office of the Minister in the Presidency. These scattered, uncoordinated efforts compound the issues for youth development, as they are not driven by a common and complementary mandate. This adds to the already uncoordinated and disintegrated youth development endeavors of the NYC, UYF and the SAYC.

Moreover institutional flaws and incapacity (10 out of 14 government departments said they do not have enough capacity)⁵, the departments are preoccupied with their own mandate than side programs resulting in insufficient attention being paid to matters of youth development.

⁵ National Youth Commission: Broad Assessment – On the Implementation of Youth Development

3.5 Overall Assessment Synopsis

The overall youth development model in South Africa can be summed up as shortsighted, scattered, duplicative, impotent and unsustainable. The following findings of the NYC research are instructive⁶:

- The institutions created for youth development have not '*necessarily*' fulfilled their mandate
- The institutions for youth development in South Africa do not complement each other, they '*rather*' compete with each other
- The lines of accountability created for these structures do not '*necessarily*' ensure accountability
- The inadequate mandate of the NYC makes it difficult for the institution to implement youth development programs
- The lack of recourse on youth development programs makes it difficult for the NYC to enforce its mandate on the public sector institutions, let alone the private sector institutions
- The Government departments do not respect institutions created for monitoring the implementation of youth development in south Africa
- The presidency has duplicated the role of the NYC by establishing a youth desk with the same roles of the NYC.

We have used inverted commas and italics to foil the hocus pocus spin employed to conceal the evident dismal failure of the current youth development model.

4. EXAMPLES OF MINISTRIES OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

The concept and practice of youth ministry is international best practice in most developing countries.

Ghana has such a ministry known as “Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment” and this ministry has emphasis on developing the skills and creating employment opportunities with a strict bias in favour of young people.

In *Sri Lanka* the “Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs” is focused on sports development and related youth matters.

The “Ministry of Youth Development and Employment Creation” in *Zimbabwe* focuses on job creation and youth development in general.

⁶ National Youth Commission: Broad Assessment –On the Implementation of Youth Development

These ministries have the powers and functions to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their mandate as well as a corresponding duty to account, regularly, for the exercise of their powers and performance of their functions.

The existence of these different models confirms the need to recognize and prioritize youth development as a matter of societal interest. This also confirms that young people constitute the largest percentage of society requiring access to education, skills and employment and as such deserve focused and dedicated attention.

Due to lack of research capacity we did not study the local impact of these youth ministries on youth development. What is clear to us is that the executive ministry is a viable international practice.

The actual delivery of the mandate and the impact thereof is a complex issue that cut across various issues such as the state ideology, human resource capacity, financial resources etc. In other words success or failure is dependent on, among others, those factors that have a direct impact thereon. So an impact study may not necessarily reveal scientific facts as proof of un-viability of the Ministry model as a catalyst for youth development.

5. THE STRATEGIC THRUST

The Ministry with its legislative and executive operations with the mandate to drive and realize youth development will only succeed if its mandate is crystal and streamlined so that it can be monitored, evaluated and held accountable on specific measurable deliverables.

In developing powers and functions (mandate) for the ministry we must be guided by aspects that are critical for youth development and challenges facing young people in that regard. General assessment shows that our youth is beset by numerous problems such as political apathy (not voter apathy because young people are not voting cows but viable and active political actors), teenage pregnancy, drug/alcohol abuse, crime, HIV/AIDS, lack of access to education, skills and unemployment.

The challenge we face in this regard is to provide access to education, create a participatory political culture, employment and fight the spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic. These major challenges should inform the thrust and strategy of the ministry with the mandate to create favourable conditions for youth development by tackling these problems head-on and holistically. We must emphasize that critical sustainable national development is dependant on our ability to deal with these problems in a focused and consistent manner.

Thus the Ministry should focus on creating and fostering an enabling environment for young people to access education, to become employable (skilled and healthy) and employed by programmatically promoting and inculcating the following values and activities: *Free and Compulsory Education, Partnerships, Participatory Political Culture, Recreational Affairs, Sports, Patriotism and a Higher Sense of Social Responsibility* among the youth.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

In order to achieve youth development ensuring full and productive participation of young people in all areas of national development agenda on the one hand and youth development on the other Ministry must perform the following tasks:

- **Generate legislative framework, policies and programs** to support youth development;
- **Integrated and co-ordinate** youth development policies and programs;
- **Monitor and evaluate** the effectiveness and impact of youth development policies and programs;
- **Develop institutional partnerships** between education, training, public and private sectors;
- **Provide financial resources** for co-operative businesses;
- **Be the voice of youth interests** in the country;
- **Be the bearer of institutional responsibility and political accountability** on youth development; and
- **Provide policies and programs for the advancement of the empowerment of rural youth and young women.**

7. WITHER THE NYC, UYF AND SAYC?

With the NYC having failed dismally to steer youth development it is only fair and in the interests of fiscal prudence in particular, and the South African public in general that this body should be disbanded. It is important to record that the failure of the NYC is largely not the making of the NYC but an institutional flaw. The NYC has been given the mandate without the power to implement, effectively reducing it into a toothless body.

In spite of its recorded failures the UYF has to be integrated into the ministry as a youth co-operative funding entity, with the youth ministry as the executive accounting authority. As a public entity UYF should strictly fund co-operatives. Those wishing to engage in private business should solicit funds from conventional micro lenders.

SAYC too has to be maintained as a forum for highlighting and advocating the

interests of young people by providing for a general Assembly, with a parliamentary session once a year to debate issues tabled by member organizations and resolutions taken to the ministry with binding effect for consideration and attendance by the ministry. The current symbolic and ceremonial youth parliaments are a waste of valuable resources.

Once integrated into the youth ministry, organizational, administrative and financial weaknesses besetting SAYC shall *ipso facto* wither away.

8. THE PROPOSED NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

To the NYC's government driven attempt to impose the mooted National Youth Development Agency ("NYDA") we ask the following questions: Where does the concept come from and how was it conceived? Who was involved in the development stages? What assumptions were relied on? What is it that the Agency will do different from the NYC? How will it achieve what the NYC could not achieve? What will be its distinguished ability or viability? PAYCO delved into these issues and the proponents of the agency could not provide answers to these questions at the 2006 Youth Convention.

Before we go any further we must record that the NYC does however recognize the call for the youth ministry, its cogency and popularity but still for reasons unknown to us opted for a patently defective model of an agency.

According to one of the Convention documents "there was wide expectation that a youth ministry would be appropriate" and that, "major stakeholders in the youth sector had argued for a ministry".

The document goes further in an attempt to construct an irrational minority and weak anti-youth ministry argument and states that in most African states the youth ministries "has been relegated to some under-resourced junior ministry "and that, the integrated development approach "require all key ministries to build the needs of youth into their programs, not to run separate youth only 'single-issues' programs".

All the above 'reasons' hardly present a case against the youth ministry. Like we stated above, the impact of the youth ministry *not its viability*, is determined by multiple factors including the state agenda and availability of financial resources. The fact that youth ministries in African states were under-resourced or relegated into juniors does not lie in the nature of the institution. It is a political question not an institutional one.

It is true that key ministries should be youth conscious and that is one logical reason why we need a youth ministry not the other way round. When you have a youth ministry it will be able to get a comprehensive view of youth challenges from different

ministries, not just key ones, on the basis of which they can develop and advance appropriate, comprehensive and complimentary interventions.... coordinated, implemented, monitored and evaluated by a single ministry. That is what integrated youth development means and should be! Let us deal with the proposed functions of the proposed agency to determine its viability.

On policy formulation those calling for the agency unwittingly expose the inherent impotency of the model by suggesting that, “there must be active interaction with the legislative process” whereas we say the youth ministry will naturally do that as a matter of institutional imperative. This admission confirms that the agency will have no special ability nor be different from the NYC in generating progressive youth development policy. If the NYC failed to do exactly what the proponents of the agency are suggesting this begs the question; what is so special about the agency that would make it ‘actively interact with the legislative processes’?

Another claim being made is that the agency “must implement programs both directly and indirectly”. The interesting part is where a mention is made about ‘monitoring’. If the agency is going to be monitoring what it is not doing and accountable for then it will be a watchdog body no longer the agent of youth development. What will we benefit by sitting and watching as the potential of multitudes of young people lay to waste while we go about winging, throwing tantrums and hurling insults at the government?

The input of the agency, to government, on youth development will have no binding effect as it is the case with the NYC. So what would exactly be the point of replacing a lame duck with a dead duck? How the agency will marshal government to become devotionally pro-youth in its development programs remains exclusive preserve knowledge of the proponents of the agency.

We are also told the agency will produce “The State of The Youth Report”. But what is so special about this? Do we need an agency to be able to do this? There are many research organizations in this country including Statistics South Africa and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) that have the capacity to do more than what the agency can ever produce. They may do a special research on the state of the youth. After all, the ministry will table an annual report that will necessarily give an account of the state of young people. Therefore there is nothing special the agency is bringing in this regard. If anything the agency may produce an ill-advised report on this matter because it will rely on being spoon-fed since it will be indirectly involved in actual youth development programmes.

For all intents and purposes coordination without integration is a mirage in theory and

practice. The proponents of the agency wish that there will be integration and coordination but do not tell us how this will be achieved without bringing all efforts under one executive and accountable body.

Political oversight of the agency by SAYC and political formations may exist but would not have binding effect on the agency unlike if it were to be effected through an executive ministry where parliament, through the national assembly and the portfolio committee on youth development will excise their power over the activities of the youth ministry. The rest of the proposed 'functions' are a recycling of what we have already debunked.

We have no doubt that replacing the NYC with the agency will be another waste of time, money and human resources that should be directed towards a viable model in the form of a youth ministry. A viable model of youth development must have the powers to develop the necessary legislative framework for progressive youth policies and programs and powers to implement, monitor and evaluate the same.

Youth development is a national imperative and government must be willing to invest resources on it and give this matter the same attention it gives to any other matter of national interest.

9. RESOURCES

The success *not the viability* of the ministry in advancing youth development will depend on the means to fund the institution and activities of the ministry. The inevitable question is from which portion of the national or other sources will the ministry derive its funding?

The availability, allocation and the quantum of resources for the ministry will be determined by ideological (what is the state (as represented by the current government) agenda?), policy (what is government priorities?) and other pertinent questions such as the actual ability of government to provide such resources.

The existing physical, financial and human resources infrastructure to make provision for youth development committed to NYC, UYF, SAYC and Government departments should be used as a basic foundation to build a well-resourced ministry of youth affairs.

10. CONCLUSION

To kick start a process towards the establishment of a youth ministry will require necessary legislative measures to repeal the NYC Act *in toto* and a legislative

enactment to provide for the location and integration of UYF and SAYC into the Ministry as state entities with the ministry being the executive authority. PAYCO believe that all youth formations and the public in general should be involved in this matter of national interest.

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