

Salients points of the draft National Youth Policy

This NYP 2020 is a ten-year vision document that seeks to unlock the potential of India's youth by 2030, in alignment with the global SDGs. The five priority areas outlined to usher such advancements include education, employment and entrepreneurship; youth leadership and development; health, fitness and sports; and social justice. The policy frameworks and guidelines require technical and financial commitments to enable equitable progress of the youth while ensuring inclusion in the design, planning and implementation of specific schemes and programmes. The key thrust areas of each of the five sectors are summarised below.

Education: Education and training systems will be strengthened and made more relevant through curricular reforms, enhancing teacher capacity, integrating value-based education, and scaling-up delivery of vocational education. In addition, the NEET youth will be supported through targeted learning programmes while at the same time reintegrating dropouts and out-of-school youth. The systems will adopt inclusive pedagogies and ensure trained teachers, counsellors, and therapists are available to disadvantaged youth.

Employment and Entrepreneurship: To revitalise the rural economy of India, agriculture and allied spheres will offer more viable, income-generating opportunities for the rural youth. For urban and peri-urban areas, micro-regional employment strategies will ensure the development of district-specific industries and SME cluster development through strong district-level ownership of the employment agenda. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education, mentorship networks and other support systems will help develop a more robust entrepreneurship ecosystem. Finally, informal and gig economy workers will be supported through social security provisions and effective demand-supply matching through technology-based employment platforms. Skilling reforms and efforts to drive awareness on government initiatives and schemes, combined with systemic support to the young urban migrant population and marginalised youth segments will chart the path for a more financially assured youth.

Youth Leadership and Development: The GoI will invest in youth leadership by strengthening the youth volunteering ecosystem. The GoI will develop a unified working approach to streamline planning and

execution of various volunteering schemes run or supported by the Central Ministries/Departments. Towards this end, the MoYAS will play a facilitative convening role for promoting youth volunteering in the country. It will provide standardized tool kits for recruitment & mobilization, framework for rewards & incentives, frameworks for impact measurement of volunteering schemes and create capacity building options. Thus, through streamlined opportunities, mentorship and due rewards and recognition MoYAS will cultivate a spirit of volunteerism among youth. Youth, especially the most marginalised, will be equipped with the necessary resources and skills for leadership roles through sustained investment in higher education and targeted leadership programmes, enhanced opportunities to engage with governance and politics, with the support of mentors and with adequate exposure. A youth volunteering and development platform will be mobilised to identify and build a cadre of youth leaders across the country.

Health, Fitness and Sports: Preventative healthcare practices will be integrated into the education curriculum and emphasised through large-scale awareness campaigns to ensure the holistic well-being of youth. In addition to quality treatment facilities, youth health issues will be prioritised like mental illnesses, sexual and reproductive health, and treatment and rehabilitation capacities for substance use disorders will be pivotal. Data will be leveraged to track the progress in youth health metrics and improve access to quality treatments. Finally, specific measures will be undertaken to provide quality healthcare access for all marginalised young women and men, including tribal, disabled, migrant, and other disadvantaged segments. A culture of sports, fitness and healthy habits will be fostered among the youth. The GoI will also invest in the holistic development of sportspersons through sports talent searches that will be expanded to be more comprehensive and inclusive while ensuring the availability of good coaches across the country. Equitable investments will be made in sporting infrastructure, and long-term support will be provided to promising sportspersons. The policy also recommends special efforts to include marginalised segments in sports and fitness programmes.

Social Justice: Empowering and safeguarding the youth from marginalised and vulnerable communities will require investments in building a value-based social fabric. Efforts will be made to reduce acts of discrimination and violence while also providing the youth with safe spaces, knowledge, and support services for their social welfare.

Raising youth awareness about their rights and initiatives related to legal aid will be crucial for these efforts. In terms of the response, the legal systems will be strengthened to ensure speedier delivery of justice, especially the Juvenile Justice Act's effective implementation and building a more robust system for juvenile rehabilitation among the delinquent youth. Specific efforts will also be made to address cybercrimes.