

**NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY
DRAFT**

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CHAPTER 1

VISION AND GOALS

VISION

New India youth stand for aspiration, enthusiasm and energy. Youth are bringing about the transformation of society in a big way. Synergizing the hopes and aspirations of India's youth to enable harmonious growth of society, is our vision. As India moves towards building a positive eco-system where the expectations and energies of youth are enabled to lead to growth for all, we would be able to harness the energies of youth more effectively towards inclusive economic growth, responsible governance and create a new India. This Kartavya Kaal has provided a golden opportunity to fulfil the dreams and goals of this aspirational society. The Youth Policy aims to build an enabling environment where youth can come together, persevere, and work relentlessly with their utmost strength towards the making of a new India.

GOALS

In pursuance of this vision, the National Youth Policy is designed to better equip the youth of the country to be better citizens and, productive. The specific policy goals are:

- (1) To facilitate youth to fulfill their role as socially responsible citizens and productive economic agents so that incomes increase across the board;
- (2) To collaborate with civil society stakeholders to strengthen support systems for youth;
- (3) To facilitate youth to act as leaders of change;
- (4) To strengthen institutional mechanisms to encourage innovation, critical thinking and analytical skills among youth;
- (5) To equip youth to be mentally fit and physically healthy to carry out all these tasks;
and
- (6) To facilitate social and economic inclusion so that no young person gets left behind in the growth process.

1. In order to fulfil the vision of India as a developed nation, it is critical to provide youth, across age-groups and geographies, with new age knowledge and skills and at the same time create social awareness needed to carry out these tasks.

2. The core focus of the Department of Youth Affairs is to provide youth with experiential learning that helps them to inculcate dignity of labor and to build relevant skill-sets and develop leadership qualities. Given the fast pace of development of technology and accompanying social change, continuous up-dation of skills is the key for youth to remain employable. Skill sets ideally include knowledge and analytical skills provided by formal learning structures and also hands-on experience. Experiential learning orients youth to the discipline of the workplace, inculcates the idea of the dignity of labor and helps to build emotional intelligence, team-work and problem-solving abilities.

3. **Community Engagement Pathways like the NSS:** In working to achieve these goals, it is important to create engagement pathways for connecting the youth with the community through various community-oriented units. The Department of Youth Affairs already nurtures many such units under the umbrella scheme, the National Service Scheme which supports units in high schools, colleges and universities. A key focus of this policy is to expand the coverage of these NSS units to the maximum number of educational institutions. This would serve several purposes. (1) Firstly it would provide a structured pathway for youth to understand and engage with the problems facing the community. (2) Secondly, it would allow the youth to work on those problems and develop a constructive problem-solving approach. (3) Thirdly it would create a healthy mechanism to reach varied social groups through a single platform. A nation succeeds on the strength of its social, economic and political institutions that encourage participation of all social groups.

4. **Other Community Engagement Pathways:** In addition to the NSS, the Department would strengthen collaboration with civil society organisations like think tank forums for the young, youth wings of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Scouts and Guides Movements etc. to expand outreach to the youth.

5. A Policy to nurture youth: The Youth Policy defines youth in India as being in the age group 15-29 years of age. India has a youth population in this age group of about 37.14 Cr. (projected figures for 2021) which is about 27.3% of the total population. This youth bulge, if correctly nurtured, can yield critical thinkers, change makers and leaders who will drive India's growth. India's young are already a big asset. They are leading change whether in business, politics, education or academia. Youth are innovating in sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture and financial services. The Youth Policy aims to enhance growth opportunities for all youth. At the same time, the policy recognises that there are large numbers of youth who need better access to social infrastructure like better quality of education, healthcare, livelihood and skills. AN NSSO survey of 2020-21 showed that the youth who are neither in education, employment or training (NEET) are roughly 32.9% of the youth population¹. The Youth Policy aims to reduce this proportion of youth.

6. Education levels of youth: An analysis of general education level of youth (15-29 age group) in the country shows that 58.29% of the youth have completed at least the secondary level of education and another 24.76% have completed up to middle level as surveyed in 2020-21. The Gross enrolment ratio (GER) at higher secondary level as per the report is 53.8% and in higher education, the GER is 27.3%. In absolute numbers, the gross enrolment at higher secondary level is 2.69 Cr. (2020-21) and in higher education i.e. from UG level to Ph.D. level, the total enrolment was 4.13 Cr. (2020-21); out of enrolment in higher education, 78.09% were enrolled at UG level and 11.5% at PG level. This means that 6.82 crore youth or 18.3% of the youth population are engaged in study in school and college. Increasing the coverage of NSS units could be one way to reach out to all such youth.

7. Good Eco-system for education of females: A heartening development is that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for 2020-21 at higher secondary level for females is 54.6% which is higher than that for males at 53%². Girls continue to maintain their edge in GER for higher education for 2020-21: the GER for females is 27.9% as compared to 26.7% for males³. These figures show that India has been able to build a positive eco-system for girl

¹ (2023) NSSO Report 589; Multiple Indicator Survey; National Sample Survey 78th round. Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, Government of India. P. 32

² Social Statistics Division, NSO, 2022; *Youth in India 2022*. Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, New Delhi.

³ Department of Higher Education, *All India Survey on Higher Education for 2020-21*. Ministry of Education; New Delhi.

students. India also has the largest pool of STEM graduates and at 47%, this makes India a global leader in STEM women graduates. With the increase in India's employable population, women's labour force participation rates in India are set to improve.

8. **Rise of new technologies:** The explosive increase in computing performance and the significant decrease in computing costs are allowing for the creation of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, additive manufacturing and bio-engineering. Industry 4.0 has unleashed rapid and exponential changes in the industry, job market and in the overall economic environment. The challenge is to better equip youth to deal with such changes. While the young population is known to be able to adapt to new technological changes, it is important to note that the young people don't form an undifferentiated monolith as such. The success of the adoption of new technologies by them is dependent on equitable access to information so that they can act with clear perspectives about these new developments.

9. **Skill, Up-skill and Re-skill:** Innovation, analytical skills, critical thinking, collaboration and team work and problem solving are essential for success in a rapidly evolving and increasingly inter-connected and inter dependent world. The emergence of industry 4.0 with its focus on technology, data analysis and automation has created new opportunities for the youth to learn new skills, re-invent their careers and thus stay ahead of the curve. The principle of '**Skill, Up-skill and Re-skill**' is to be adopted for success in this new environment. This would be brought about through initiatives such as experiential learning in real-life work situations, on-the-job training programs, online courses, mentorship networks and knowledge-sharing sessions etc. Thus, the youth will have to equip themselves with necessary skills to succeed in the digital age and thereupon navigate the changing job market. This process can be facilitated by different agencies across private, corporate, public and non-government sectors e.g., through experiential learning in businesses, and Government Departments, online learning platforms, corporate training programs, government sponsored re-skilling programs for citizens, short-term courses by universities and colleges, computer courses etc. Thus, skill development and digital inclusion of all categories of youth are going to be key to reducing and eliminating inequality amongst the youth.

10. **District Youth Information and Resource Centers:** The Government is committed to strengthening good governance that is pro-people and proactive in approach. The Vision 2047 for the Department of Youth Affairs, Government of India through its ‘Action Agenda’, seeks inter alia to reach out to the vulnerable groups through a variety of mechanisms. A key intervention proposed is setting up of State of the Art District Youth information and Resource Centres in all districts. This is going to be a very important step since, otherwise, there is every possibility that these vulnerable groups will continue to remain left out from the development process in the emerging industrial environment. The policy aims to provide such groups appropriate hand holding support to make them fit to participate in the development process.

11. **Employability and Skills:** Recent data on unemployment suggests that the overall unemployment rate amongst the youth (15-29 years) was around 12.4 % in 2021-22⁴. Apart from the challenge posed by high level of unemployment, the employability of youth is equally a matter of concern. Overall employability of students as estimated by the India Skills Report 2023 has improved from 40.4% in 2017 to 50.3% in 2023⁵. This average includes significant variation between graduates of different streams as can be seen in the Table below.

Table 1: Employability as per India Skills report 2023

Courses	Employability as per India Skills report 2023
B.Com., MBA	~ 60%
B. Tech, B. Pharm	~ 57%
B.A.	~ 49%
Bsc.	~ 37%
ITI	~ 34%
MCA	~ 30%
Polytechnic	~ 27%

Source: India Skills Report 2023; p. 29

⁴ (2023), Annual Report: Periodic Labor Force Survey (June 2021-July 2022); Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation; New Delhi. P.69

⁵Wheebox, Tagged and Confederation of Indian Industry, 2023. *India Skills Report 2023*; Wheebox, Tagged and CII.

It has been observed that the demand for skilled labour and digital literacy is increasing as more businesses hire new graduates and seasoned experts. As a complement to the efforts of the School Education, Higher Education and Skill Development Departments to reduce the skill gap, the Department of Youth Affairs plans to focus on providing youth in rural and urban areas with structured work experience in real-life situations. The effort would be to include as far as possible the general education stream comprising B.A/Bsc. where employability is lower than in the technical branches of education.

12. **A Youth Portal for improved Governance:** For connecting youth with businesses, public and private sector organisations, the policy plans to leverage internet based digital tools. A portal for youth would be built by the Department of Youth Affairs that allows such organisations to on-board themselves and offer a variety of opportunities to youth for work experience and skill enhancement and to improve digital and financial literacy.

13. **Building Leadership Skills:** Another focus area for the youth portal would be building leadership skills. An intelligent, emotionally balanced, responsible, accountable, transparent and a democratically oriented youth leadership, can stabilize and render cushioning support to the community whenever it tries to adapt with fast paced changes. The development of youth leadership thus calls for smooth flow of systemic information and knowledge required for growth. The leadership development process in different fields can be facilitated through a robust mentorship network. Volunteering on the part of the mentors in providing expert guidance to the youth on a regular basis can have great impact. The youth portal would reach out to mentors in different fields and encourage them to on-board themselves to provide youth with an opportunity to avail of their wisdom and experience.

14. **Healthy body and sound mind:** Finally, the strength and energy of the youth comes from their healthy body, enabled by a sound mind. A society, prone to diseases and discriminations is a weak society and thus cannot make a great nation. This is more relevant for the youth because youth is the time when a person feels spirited to achieve and make everything possible. Diseases can be defeated by a healthy body and a strong mind. Keeping oneself fit through preventive healthcare practices needs to be ingrained in the youth culture. Every youth needs to have time for playing some games and access to sporting facilities. The

new youth portal would attempt to address these needs so as to facilitate holistic development of youth in India.

ACTIVITY ROAD MAP PROPOSED

Activity Roadmap for Medium Term	
Goal	Metrics for achievement
Create Engagement pathways via community-oriented units in the field and to diversify the engagement of these units to include local businesses, farms, rural and urban local bodies so as to achieve a deeper understanding of local society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The maximum numbers of educational institutions should establish community engagement units of some variety whether NSS/NCC or any other model. 2. To develop and institutionalize an index of social engagement. 3. To reduce the proportion of those youth who are not in education, employment or training from 32.9%.
Develop digital portals to address information needs of youth and connect youth to opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To increase internet use to meet information needs of youth and to increase the proportion of business-to-business and consumer-to-business transactions in comparison to consumer-to-government transactions. 5. To fund data centers in at least one educational institution in each district to collate data on youth and encourage use of data in policy-making.
Build Mentoring Systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. To recognize the contribution of mentors who willingly give their time for the youth and encouraging more mentorship. 7. To set up funding plans to support mentoring networks for youth.
To improve inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable youth population	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. To develop tracking system for school and college alumni. 9. To develop tracking system for school and college dropouts.
Institutionalize public forums where youth can articulate their voices and connect these with policymaking including building of international platforms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. To conduct regular dialogues with youth across different verticals- students, professionals and self-employed youth on issues of public policy and share those views with policy makers. 11. To conduct youth parliaments at block level once in every two years. 12. To facilitate educational institutions in organizing regular international consultations on public policy and help to

Activity Roadmap for Medium Term	
Goal	Metrics for achievement
	<p>institutionalize youth exchange programs with other countries.</p> <p>13. Build a School of Leadership to train young leaders who would be equipped for the task for building a new India.</p>
Improve health, fitness and sports culture among youth and improve mental health	<p>14. To set up a talent registry for sportspersons which could be used as a database for Sports and Athletics Federations.</p> <p>15. To support Adventure Sports Organisations to organize adventure expeditions in all districts of the country.</p> <p>16. To fund counselling systems to improve the mental health of youth.</p>

Activity Roadmap for Long Term	
Goal	Metrics for achievement
Broaden the base of community-oriented units in the field and to deepen the engagement of these units with local society such that these units become problem solvers	<p>1. Maximum educational institutions should establish community engagement units of some variety whether NSS/NCC or any other model.</p> <p>2. All students should have access to experiential learning opportunities in the local community.</p>
Strengthen Mentoring Systems and connect these with global networks	<p>3. To support a registry of mentors in different sectors who willingly give of their time to support youth.</p> <p>4. To connect local mentoring networks with global mentoring networks.</p>
To reduce proportion of marginalized and vulnerable youth population to minimum	<p>5. To use existing tracking mechanisms for school and college alumni and dropouts to see that financial support and counselling is made available to all and no one gets left behind.</p>
Globalize public forums where youth can articulate their voices and connect these with policymaking and evaluate impact of policies on youth	<p>6. India can institutionalize public forums for youth, bringing together people from diverse professional backgrounds, where international voices can also find a place. Each state in the country should have one such public forum of international stature.</p> <p>7. To fund an impact evaluation research center to conduct surveys to assess impact of new policies on youth.</p>

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Education, employment and entrepreneurship are closely connected with each other. While education empowers through knowledge and foundational skills, employment provides a means of livelihood. Any gaps between foundational skills and market demands, reduces the employability of youth. The Department of Youth Affairs is working to complement the efforts made by the Departments of Education and Skill Development by providing a structured work experience in real life work situations. Youth can utilise their spare time during the most important years of life to learn some skill, even while going through formal education. Holidays during the most important years of life should be put to good use to learn new things. At the same time, youth can also help others. Many young people are well aware of the use of internet tools, online banking and online ticket booking and in this respect they are ahead of the older generation. The young can help small entrepreneurs, local businesses, shopkeepers and farmers to use these new technologies. By working in their spare time in local businesses, they can learn themselves too. Both these tasks can be combined by connecting youth with local businesses. Such experiential learning would allow youth to understand the discipline of the workplace and to inculcate the dignity of labor. This can also allow youth an opportunity to learn something, generate new ideas; it can also improve their perception about entrepreneurship. This is experiential learning.

Complement Department of Education

1. The education system focuses on providing foundational knowledge; it can also encourage students to supplement this information with practical skills and analytical skills. This would enable youth to develop their abilities to interpret facts in a logical way. Practical work experience in turn helps strengthen theoretical concepts. The Department of Youth Affairs works with a number of field organisations, businesses and youth clubs on very practical issues and community-oriented projects. Hence the Department is ideally placed to provide a connect to practical skills for youth.

Structured Programs for Experiential Learning

2. The Department of Youth Affairs, aims to create pathways for engagement of the youth with the other stakeholders viz., the local businesses, farms, rural and urban local bodies etc. in a whole of government approach. Such a process helps to achieve a deeper understanding of the local society and inculcates a problem solving approach. It helps youth to inculcate dignity of labour. Secondly, such a system can expand the scope for experiential learning for a large number of youth. Such learning includes but is not limited to cognitive skills, learning to work as a team, using software applications etc. Students can acquire such relevant skills by working in business organizations. The Youth Policy would facilitate a connect between youth and businesses for a structured work experience program of roughly 360 hours or as per need.

For students, such work experience could also be given academic credit in the course of study for which the student is enrolled. Such a provision exists in the National Education Policy 2020. For non-students, such work experience can be of great value insofar as it provides practical knowledge and also in that it could encourage them to become job creators. Exchange of ideas with Local Business Enterprises can help build more stable and prosperous communities.

Importance of Life Skills and Cognitive Skills

3. Life skills., are recognized as those essential skills that bring together the social, emotional and cognitive capacities of a person to solve problems and achieve goals; they go hand in hand with the development process from childhood and assist the students to achieve their life goals. Thus, opportunities for acquiring knowledge and skills through engagement with businesses and farms, can eventually transform the conventional education system and will bring about far better learning outcomes for the youth which can help them to adapt with the fast-changing patterns of technological and economic transformations taking place in the modern world.

Access to Work Experience through YUVA Portal

4.. To provide access to such a structured work experience, the Department would develop an internet enabled youth portal on which businesses and Government Departments

can on-board themselves and offer practical work opportunities. The participation of the private sector is pivotal in this regard. A private sector-led skilling ecosystem can ensure that skill development is demand-driven and addresses the need of the market. Exposure to real-life work situations can help youth to get in touch with potential employers. It can also provide youth with greater self-confidence. Such learning can help youth to understand the importance of entrepreneurship and become job creators themselves.

By connecting youth with businesses pan-India, the start-up culture can permeate down to small towns and even villages. Currently, the youth in the larger urban areas are already aware of the value of entrepreneurship. Through the experiential learning program, these new sensitivities can spread to other areas too. “Start-up India, Stand-up India” should not be limited to a few cities only. It should spread to every corner of India. The transformation of youth from dreaming of becoming job seekers to becoming job creators, can be the turning point of India’s growth story.

Case Study 1: Youth Club in Surat District

The Action Youth Club in Surat district is working hard to empower the tribal youth in the area, especially school students. Through informal education and other activities, they strive to provide betterment opportunities for more than 200 students. This club focuses on providing knowledge and skills that are not taught in traditional classrooms, such as leadership development, problem-solving skills, and communication. With their efforts, they aim to create a more equitable society where every young person has access to quality education and resources. They also seek to foster an environment of respect and understanding among all members of the community.

Common Problems in Accessing Improved Livelihood opportunities

5. Youth in general, face various kinds of difficulties in access to improved livelihoods. Typical problems are absence of appropriate career guidance, information asymmetry & limited avenues for regular up-dation of skills. A youth portal that uses the whole of Government approach can improve access to information and reduce information asymmetry for youth. Given the fast pace of development of technology and accompanying social change, continuous up-dation of skills is the key for the youth to remain employable.

Some statistics about labor force participation in India given below show various dimensions of the problem.

Labor Force Participation Rates

6. Table 2: Labor Force Participation Rates

M: Male, F Female, P: Person

All figures in percentages

Sector	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21			2021-22		
	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P
15-29 Years												
Rural	58.8	15.8	37.8	60.8	20.7	41.3	60.6	22.0	42.0	62.1	22.3	42.6
Urban	58.6	17.1	38.7	58.3	20.3	40.0	59.0	19.0	39.9	58.9	20.2	40.6
Rural + Urban	58.8	16.2	38.1	60	20.6	40.9	60.1	21.1	41.4	61.2	21.7	42
15 years and above												
Rural	76.4	26.4	51.5	77.9	33.0	55.5	78.1	36.5	57.4	78.2	36.6	57.5
Urban	73.7	20.4	47.5	74.6	23.3	49.3	74.6	23.2	49.1	74.7	23.8	49.7
Rural + Urban	75.5	24.5	50.2	76.8	30.0	53.5	77.0	32.5	54.9	77.2	32.8	55.2

Source: (2023), Annual Report: Periodic Labor Force Survey (June 2021-July 2022); Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation; New Delhi. P.49; (2022), Annual Report: Periodic Labor Force Survey (June 2020-July 2021); Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation; New Delhi. P.48.

Low rates of labor force participation among youth

7. Whereas, the overall Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in 2020-21 for all working age groups (i.e. 15 years & above) is about 55% (Rural and Urban together), the LFPR for the age group 15-29 years is 41.4%. Low rates of labour force participation among youth are natural, given that many young people are engaged in full-time studies or in training in preparation for future work. Youth may be economically inactive by choice, spending their time on personal development or carrying out the responsibilities associated with marriage, household work, raising children, or providing care to older relatives. There are concerns that young women who still bear the primary responsibility for taking care of children and the home, remain excluded from economic opportunities outside the home, due to their personal choice. Moreover, inactivity may also reflect aspects of economic exclusion among youth; for example, there are young people who have exited the labour market out of frustration,

those who have never actively sought work because they believe that decent jobs are not available, and also those youths who have been denied work because of discrimination. Other reasons for low LFPR in respect of female youth may be about the working conditions such as law and order, inefficient public transportation, violence against women, societal norms etc.

Unemployment reflects possible mis-match between Expectation and Jobs Available

8. Unemployment on the other hand indicates difficulties in transition to work faced by the young people. Unemployment Rate (UR) in the youth age group of 15-29 years in 2021-22 at 12.4% is almost three times that of 4.1% for all working age groups (15 years & above)⁶. As per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) (Jan – March 2023), unemployment rate in urban areas is 6.8% for those aged 15 years and above; 6% for males and 9.2% for females. Young people are generally new entrants to the labour market with little or no job experience and are competing for entry-level positions. They are also exploring and experimenting with different types of work and are thus more prone to leave jobs that do not meet their goals and expectations or to move frequently to secure better positions.

Using Technology to Address Information Asymmetry

9. The Youth portal can help improve livelihood opportunities for youth in a number of different ways.
 - a. Providing access to career counselling by connecting career guidance centers and mentors with youth.
 - b. Providing information about job opportunities that are available. The proposed Youth Portal would map addresses and pincodes of youth who are registered on the portal. This would enable large employers to push notifications to youth in locations where they are looking to hire people.
 - c. Allow youth to post their resumes online for potential employers.

Need for Youth to be Job Creators

10. A key policy focus is encouraging youth to be job creators. In recent years, business loans have been advanced by banks to large numbers of youth and especially women, to support entrepreneurship. Providing counselling and support can improve

⁶ Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation; Annual Report: Periodic Labor Force Survey (July 2021-June 2022). P. xi, xiv.

the skills of these entrepreneurs and reduce risk. Internet tools like e-commerce platforms can be used to connect demand and supply and can improve efficiencies of entrepreneurial youth. One of the typical traits associated with entrepreneurs is the ability to identify and supply a need. As the economies around the globe evolve, it can be said to become more favourable for young people in filling gaps and supplying needs. The Youth Policy aims to improve access to information and the ability to apply and use information to generate wealth.

Entrepreneurial Eco-System needs mentors

11. A good mentor can take a start-up to new heights; mentors can guide the founders in every way toward the right decision. Entrepreneurship culture demands a proper system to be developed for training as well as guidance of the youth by designated trainers and mentors for developing talents like leadership qualities and organising capabilities along with appropriate knowledge, skill and self-confidence. A well-developed eco-system of entrepreneurial support is achieved through identifying those willing to offer mentorship and connecting these with youth. This policy aims to:

- (1) To recognize the contribution of mentors who willingly give their time for the youth and encouraging more mentorship.
- (2) To set up funding plans to support mentoring networks for young entrepreneurs.

Case Study 2: E Yantra

The success story of e-Yantra

e-Yantra is an initiative by IIT Bombay that aims to create the next generation of engineers and innovators by providing hands-on experience in robotics and automation. It was born out of the early efforts at Distance Education since 2002 at IIT Bombay. It offers various programs and competitions for students to learn and apply their skills in the field of robotics and engineering in general. More importantly it trains them in both hard engineering skills and also “soft-skills” such as teamwork, collaboration, self-learning, innovation and entrepreneurship.

e-Yantra competitions provide students with hands-on experience in designing, building, and programming robots to solve “societal problems.” By participating in these programs, students learn skills such as coding, building automation systems, problem-solving, and critical thinking. This mindset is essential for the future of work, where individuals need to be able to adapt to changing circumstances and come up with creative solutions to complex problems.

e-Yantra Robotics Competition trains students in complex engineering skills online in contemporary skills such as: Drones, Mobile Collaborative robots, Embedded Systems, Machine Learning, Functional Programming, building complex control systems and so on. The competition “themes” train in particular technology stacks based on their potential for start-ups. Qualifying participants are given kits upon which e-Yantra trains and mentors them in practical

skills - remotely. By providing students with practical experience, e-Yantra helps bridge the gap between academia and industry, making students more employable in the future.

e-Yantra Lab Setup Initiative (eLSI) sets up labs in engineering, science, polytechnic and agricultural colleges that foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. 475+ labs have been set up till date in colleges throughout India and even Bhutan. By participating in e-Yantra programs, students learn to identify problems and develop innovative solutions.

e-Yantra Innovation Challenge (eYIC) is a 6-month long competition that trains students to utilise the technology stacks they've been trained upon to solve real societal problems. The goal is to render them able to discover a real problem as a basis for a start-up. Then e-Yantra mentors them to articulate a solution and to build a prototype and finally to pitch their business idea to an Incubator.

e-Yantra has already engaged successfully with students in India as is evident in the exponential growth of registrations from 4500 in 2012 to over 34,500 in 2019. Despite the disruption due to the pandemic, since 2022, there have been 12000 registrations in 2022-23.

e-Yantra helps build mentorship networks by providing students with access to a community of peers through its e-Yantra labs and participation in competitions. e-Yantra programs and competitions bring together students from different parts of the country, creating a community of like-minded individuals who share a passion for robotics and automation. This community provides students with opportunities to collaborate, share ideas, and learn from each other.

The key indicators of e-Yantra's success is the effect on the careers of students. Participation in e-Yantra facilitate excellent placements. Alumni have been absorbed in top companies due to their practical skills. Some are inspired to pursue PG degrees with many going to top learning institutions. Still others have used their training to do start-ups in hardcore engineering domain. In addition to Drona Automation, the programme has nurtured start-ups such as Nex Robotics, Nibrus Technologies, Katomaran Technologies and Rymo Technologies Private Limited.

Case Study 3: TiE

Fostering entrepreneurship for the last 23 years, TiE Delhi-NCR is a vibrant chapter across the TiE Network. With marquee events, engaging mentoring programs, best in class entrepreneurial awards, and fervent investor pitches, TiE Delhi-NCR is continuously working towards strengthening and flourishing the Indian start-up ecosystem. The aim is to help entrepreneurs gain access to the best experts and grow their businesses.

TiE Delhi-NCR is part of the Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), a global non-profit organisation that was founded in 1992 in Silicon Valley by a group of successful entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and senior professionals with roots in the Indus region. TiE Global is devoted to entrepreneurs in all industries, at all stages, from incubation, throughout the entrepreneurial lifecycle. With a global reach and a local focus, the heart of TiE efforts lies in its five foundational programs, – Mentoring, Networking, Education, Funding, and Incubation.

Mentoring = the biggest driver of value across the TiE world for associate members as well as for charter members

- For associate members, it is a way of accessing guidance from appropriate mentors
- For charter members, to whom TiE is a medium of giving back, mentoring is the vehicle to help guide and nurture budding entrepreneurs. In the process, they also get exposed to new ideas and sometimes, also investment opportunities

Based on the ancient Indian Guru Shishya tradition, Mentoring is a key pillar of TiE. TiE Delhi-NCR facilitates, several initiatives to foster peer to peer mentoring as well as experienced mentor interaction with mentees.

Mentoring programs

One on One Mentoring Sessions

Through this programme, TiE links its Members with its Charter Members – prominent entrepreneurs who voluntarily support the next generation of entrepreneurs through advice and access to contacts. To optimize this process, TiE has developed a complementary mentoring stage in which a business coach holds one-to-one mentoring sessions twice a month.

Feedback not Funding Session

Launching a business is an exciting time. However, it can be extremely overwhelming, especially when funding becomes a top priority. Knowing when to acquire funding, the right sources to reach out to and how to pitch to investors will significantly boost their chances. With a view to helping entrepreneurs with their funding objectives, TiE conducts sessions titled – Feedback, not Funding.

Mentoring through TYE

TYE (TiE Young entrepreneurs) is a TiE Global initiative integrating classroom sessions, mentoring and a Startup competition aimed at High School students (grades 9-12 or equivalent). Teams compete at the chapter level and winners of those competitions have the opportunity to compete at TYE Global Finals for cash prizes and recognition.

Mentoring through Startup Accelerator and Venture Studio

The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE Delhi-NCR) put together unique programs, ‘Start-up Accelerator’ and ‘Venture Studio’, spread over 48 hours, 6 days and across 2 weekends. The program aims to equip entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and insights to accelerate their entrepreneurial journey and build & scale for success. The program delivers tangible insights, specific subjects of daily interest to entrepreneurs, something they cannot obtain elsewhere, and provide detailed information and practical tips from practitioners – experienced entrepreneurs, VCs, angel investors and domain experts.

Mentoring sessions for start-ups at different TiE Competitions

TiE provides mentoring support to the startups at different TiE Competitions such as

- Spirit of Manufacturing Awards
- Design-Led Entrepreneurship Awards
- TiE – Lumis Partners Entrepreneurial Excellence Award
- TiE The Knot
- Assistive Solutions Cohort

Key Metrics for Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship

Goal	Metric
Create Engagement pathways via community-oriented units in the field and to diversify the engagement of these units to include local	1. Set up structured courses for experiential learning in local businesses and/or community-based organisations for youth such that the maximum numbers of youth can avail of practical experience in a real-life situation.

Goal	Metric
businesses, farms, rural and urban local bodies so as to achieve a deeper understanding of local society	
Develop digital portals to address information needs of youth and connect youth to opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To increase internet use to meet information needs of youth and to increase the proportion of business-to-business and consumer-to-business transactions in comparison to consumer-to-government transactions. 3. To fund data centers in educational institutions in all districts to collate data on youth and encourage use of data in policy-making.
Build Mentoring Systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To recognize the contribution of mentors who willingly give their time for the youth and encouraging more mentorship. 5. To set up funding plans to support mentoring networks for youth.

CHAPTER 3

INCULCATING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AMONG YOUTH & OUTREACH TO VULNERABLE GROUPS

A key policy goal is to better equip youth with an appreciation of the issues that are important to local society and to build capacities to provide constructive solutions to such issues, where needed. They should also be able to relate to and understand the larger issues that face the nation. To understand and appreciate the diversity of the nation at large and that different social groups can follow culturally different practices, National Exchange Programs like Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat and Tribal Area Exchange Programs are of great importance. Youth should be willing and able to learn languages spoken in other parts of India. Special lectures can help the youth to understand and appreciate our rich heritage and feel proud and confident of our country, its culture and values. Since the 1960s and 1970s, two key organisations that have promoted such social engagement are the Nehru Yuvak Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and the National Service Scheme. In order to achieve this policy goal, the Department of Youth Affairs proposes to improve coverage of these institutions both by using digital technologies and by expanding presence in educational institutions. By building and intensifying social engagement through such community-oriented units, it would be possible for Indian youth to build an inclusive society in this Amrit Kaal where no young person is left behind. Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas is the way to build new India through Jan Bhagidaari.

Nehru Yuvak Kendra Sangathan

1. Currently the NYKS network is present directly in districts in the country. Each district is led by a District Youth Officer reporting to the State Director and ultimately to the Director General of the NYKS. The development of a YUVA portal would expand the envelope of action available to District Youth Affairs, enable them to create useful content, to synergise with other Government Departments and to provide experiential learning to youth in Government and in social enterprises.
2. The NYKS network would collaborate with various public and private sector organisations which would be on-boarded onto the YUVA portal to provide such experiential learning. Each Government departments can offer a unique perspective on

social engagement and also practical exposure to workplace skills like team building, communication skills, program management and project work.

3. Work experience in different Departments can help build sensitivity to social issues and especially problems faced by vulnerable and marginalized youth. Working in the Police Department for instance can provide youth with valuable insights into subjects like drug abuse, traffic management, basic provisions of criminal laws. Such information can be very useful to develop a balanced approach to life and to mature into responsible citizens. Government Departments can provide some unique insight through a structured work experience which can be valuable to youth. So can private sector organisations. The YUVA portal would offer all such organisations an opportunity to engage with youth. Engagement with local bodies can facilitate youth engagement with National Missions like the Swachhta Abhiyan.
4. The YUVA portal by registering youth pan-India, would facilitate the placement of youth in various exchange programs like Tribal Area Exchange Programs, Border Areas Programs also.
5. Special lectures can help the youth to understand and appreciate our rich heritage and feel proud and confident of our country, it's culture and values.

National Service Scheme

6. The National Service Scheme organization is part of the Department of Youth Affairs. The current coverage of the scheme in educational institutions and proposed improvement are as follows:

Type of Institution	Current NSS Presence in Percentage	Proposed Expansion in Medium Term
High Schools	4.5%	Maximum possible
Colleges	55%	Maximum possible
Universities	63%	100%

The above table shows that the largest gap in coverage of the NSS is in high schools. A significant expansion requires an equally significant increase in the capacities of the Department of Youth Affairs at all levels. Proportionate investments in capacity building of officials would be made with a special focus on awareness and use of digital technologies.

Community-Oriented Events to engage youth

7. Both the NYKS and the NSS use a large number of community-oriented events to engage youth.
 - a. National Integration Camps,
 - b. Blood donation camps,
 - c. Environment conservation, plantation of trees and their upkeep, soil & water conservation,
 - d. Energy conservation,
 - e. Shramdaan Shivar, plastic waste management, swachhta activities including cleaning and maintenance of streets,
 - f. Campaigns against drug abuse, AIDS awareness, ODF,
 - g. Literacy programs with special focus on financial & digital literacy,
 - h. Gender sensitisation,
 - i. Creating awareness about savings & investments are some such activities.
8. Organizing of National Integration Camps at various locations across the country with support of agencies like NYKS, NSS and the Scout & Guide Organizations, can provide opportunity to youth from different regions and linguistic backgrounds to interact and share their experiences with each other, thereby promoting and disseminating the spirit of national integration. This would help promote understanding and appreciation of the rich pluralistic culture of the nation.
9. The effectiveness of the social service management eco-system also depends on strengthening of partnership with civil society organisations. The Department would facilitate civil society organisations in long-term engagement with the community for the above programs.

Case Study 4: BUDS

Bal Umang Drishya Sanstha (BUDS)(www.budsngo.org) is a 20 years old non-profit organization established with the aim to advance the well-being, education, health, and welfare of children and youth in India without distinction of caste, class, gender, ethnicity, and religion, rural/urban, physical or mental disability. The organisation is supported by faculty of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

BUDS works on community health, education, vocational & skill development initiatives and prevention of violence against children and youth in the urban slums of NCT region of Delhi, Dehradun, Uttarakhand & backward rural aspirational district Nuh, Haryana.

BUDS reaches out to thousands of internally displaced, migrant children, runaway youths who live or work on the urban slums and street situations in order to escape poverty, domestic abuse, violence, and trafficking. These marginalised youth are often victim of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, child labour, exploitation, child marriage and violence. Many of these orphan and vulnerable street children have limited access to education, health care and nutrition.

BUDS operates 12 Drop in centres (DIC) for marginalised children and youth in 3 states of India and in urban slums of NCT region of Delhi.. The DIC centers offer a safe day care space for children and youth living in urban slums and in marginalised villages, where they are provided free mid-day meals, remedial education, counselling and health services in a youth friendly environment. The DICs are linked to a dedicated Mobile Health Van (MHV), where the children and youth are provided access to free primary health care and referral services for secondary and tertiary care. Using a socio-ecological model (SEM), BUDS engages with different stakeholders such as peer leaders, sarpanch, community members, teachers, influencers and religious leaders to address the issues of the youth. Using Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) strategy and tools, such as co-creation of Information Education and Curriculum (IEC), role plays, community theatre, puppets shows, sports, bike rally, vaccine champions and social media campaigns, BUDS improved the COVID and routine vaccine acceptance in the marginalised communities. BUDS doctors and multidisciplinary professionals provide training and education to strengthen the capacity of government frontline health workers (FHW), and establish robust referral systems for secondary and tertiary health care.

Other Community Engagement Pathways

10. In addition to the NSS and the NYKS, the Department would strengthen collaboration with civil society organisations like think tank forums for the young, youth wings of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Scouts and Guides Movements etc. to expand outreach to the youth. With the rise of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility, there are several industry groups that are working with the youth. The Department would increase engagement with such groups to increase outreach.

Use of Digital Portal to improve social engagement

11. The utilization of youth-oriented digital portal (YUVA) that is under rapid development would help in addressing not only the information needs of the youth, but also in providing guidance about opportunities opening up in different sectors including possibilities in the field of community service. Moreover, by generating a database of youth with information about their skill sets, it would become possible for various public sector organisations to reach out to youth in case they wish to organise any community oriented events. The portal would allow non-government organisations working with the

youth to onboard themselves and expand the envelope of opportunities available to youth.

Encouraging Inclusive Social and Economic growth

12. There are various categories of youth who feel marginalized in society. These groups could be: (i) Socially and economically disadvantaged youth, (ii) Out-of-school or drop-outs, (iii) Youth living in conflict affected districts, (iv) Youth living with disability or suffering from chronic diseases, (v) Youth at risk i.e. those suffering from substance abuse, human trafficking, working in hazardous occupations, sex workers, etc., (vi) Youth suffering from social or moral stigma like LGBT youth, youth infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, (vii) Youth in orphanages, correctional homes, etc.

13. These groups face barriers in availing of educational and employment opportunities. In order to promote inclusive growth, information about supportive government programs would be actively disseminated to improve coverage of marginalised communities. This approach is also in keeping with the SDGs, especially SDG No. 16, which mandates as under:

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

14. The Department of Youth Affairs would collaborate with Departments of Social Justice and Department of Health and Family Welfare to support campaigns against substance abuse, and offer counselling to youth affected by such phenomena.

Case Study 5: Impact of Counselling

Guidance and Counselling

Ram, 20, male, was unable to take a decision about his future career path i.e., whether to study science or commerce, when he was in Class X. He was a good student and was studying in a boarding school. His parents, with a low level of education and engaged in farming, were unable to guide him. In his village, young children got involved in casual work at an early age. Ram also did not have an ambition to continue studies after Class XII and thought of getting involved in agricultural activities to support his parents. Finally, he met the school counsellor and shared his concern. After listening to him, the counsellor applied for a Differential Aptitude Test and also enquired about his past performance in different subjects. Based on the performance in the Differential Aptitude Test and

considering his interest, as well past academic performance indifferent subjects, the counsellor suggested that he study science and asked him to take admission in Class XI in science stream. Ram performed well in Class XII Board Examination and now he is studying Mechanical Engineering in an IIT.

Using Data Analytics as a tool for public policy & An Index for Social Engagement

15. To collate data in support of all the above initiatives, data centres would be supported in educational institutions in all districts. Such centres can capture local data on opportunities and social activities in the locality so that the youth can get connected with these activities. To provide a robust database for collation and analysis of youth related data pan-India, the National Youth Policy would support the following initiatives:

- a.** The Policy proposes to support Data collation and Analysis centers for Youth at district level. It is proposed to set up such centers in each district by 2030. Educational institutions would be supported in setting up such centers. These data centers can empower youth in a number of different ways.
- b.** A key objective of Data centers would be the setting up of a tracking and monitoring system to track all those in school and college and those who drop out of the system. Dropouts can be contacted to offer support. In this way, the Policy proposes to reduce the numbers of youth who are neither in education, employment or training from 32.9%.
- c.** Developing an index of social engagement to improve engagement with society. Such an index is an important metric to understand the activities in which youth are engaged; to understand how facilitating and support mechanisms could be set up. Such an index in combination with a tracking mechanism for those in and outside school and college, can help minimise the proportion of NEET youth.

National Youth Awards

16. National Youth Awards (NYA) are being given since 1985. As part of the National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development, the Awards are usually presented on National Youth Day (12th January) on the occasion of Birth Anniversary of Swamy Vivekananda. They are given to up to individuals (15-29 years) and voluntary organizations to give recognition to the outstanding work done by them. The objective of the award is to motivate young persons to achieve excellence in the field of national development or social service and to develop in them a sense of responsibility to the community and thus to improve their own personal potential as good citizens. The

award is given for identifiable excellent work for youth in different fields of development activities and social service such as health, research and innovation, culture, promotion of human rights, art and literature, tourism, traditional medicine, active citizenship, community service, sports and academic excellence & smart learning. The Policy proposes to continue these awards as a means of motivating youth and recognizing excellent work.

Activity roadmap

To actualize the objective i.e. collaborating with civil society stakeholders to strengthen support systems for youth, the activity Roadmap for the next decade is as under:

Objective	Metric
Create Engagement pathways via community-oriented units in the field and to diversify the engagement of these units to include local businesses, farms, rural and urban local bodies so as to achieve a deeper understanding of local society and of the problems faced by vulnerable youth and work for their betterment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximum numbers of educational institutions should establish community engagement units of some variety whether NSS/NCC or any other model. 2. To develop and institutionalize an index of social engagement. 3. To reduce the proportion of those youth who are not in education, employment or training from 32.9%.
To collaborate with civil society stakeholders to strengthen support systems for youth and to build consciousness and acceptance of cultural diversity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop digital portals to address information needs of youth about social activities, government programs and connect youth to opportunities. 2. To connect youth from different areas of the nation via various exchange programs so as to strengthen social cohesion and to build an understanding and acceptance of the diversity of India.

CHAPTER 4

BUILDING LEADERSHIP SKILLS: YOUTH AS LEADERS OF CHANGE

Youth are the leaders of tomorrow. Youth leadership happens any time a young person takes control, manages, directs and leads herself and also others. Within themselves, young people show leadership by identifying what matters to them and holding true to those things, including their values, objectives, goals & ideas. Young people can ‘lead’ by example, ‘lead’ by following and ‘lead through determination’. Youth play a crucial role in national development and contribute their skill in every sector in a developing economy. The Youth Policy will focus on generating supportive mechanisms for developing young leaders and entrepreneurs. This will be done in several ways: one by institutionalizing public forums where youth can articulate their voices and two by building a school of Leadership that would develop educational programs for training young leaders driven by a sense of mission to realize the goal of a developed India. Supportive mechanisms would also include building mentoring systems for the young, including for science and technology.

Importance of Generating Supportive mechanisms for building leadership

1. **National Youth Day** is observed on 12 January in India to spread awareness about the youth and draws attention to the issues faced by the youth. The day focuses on the efforts of the youth in the development of the country. It is important that youth get the right platform to voice their opinions, share their ideas and showcase their talent. There is a need for inclusive support mechanisms for youth so that they can amplify their efforts collectively and individually to restore the planet and protect it. The National Youth Policy would focus on generating and supporting such institutional mechanisms.

Building mentoring systems

2. The young need mentoring systems to counsel them and provide support per need. Efforts would be made to identify mentors who are willing to give of their time and to connect them with the young. For science and technology mentoring, senior and

high-achieving scientists and technologists would be involved to mentor youngsters including students, faculty and others.

Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Program

3. To provide supportive mechanisms to youth, Department of Youth Affairs has been running an umbrella scheme/ program viz., Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakaram (RYSK) which enables participation and active engagement of the youth for assuming leadership roles. To further the objective of the leadership development of youth, the Department of Youth Affairs under the sub-scheme viz., National Programme for Youth & Adolescent Development (NPYAD), organises several activities/ programs viz., National Youth Festival, North-East Youth Festival, Youth Exchange Programs, National Integration Camps, Adventure Camps, Skill Camps, Cycling rallies, Mountaineering & Skiing, River Rafting, etc.

Re-Structuring National Youth Festival

4. The National Youth Festival is an annual event organized by Department of Youth Affairs, Government of India in collaboration with one of the State Government which hosts the National Youth Festival. Over the years, the festival has become an important platform for young people from all parts of the country to showcase their talents, exchange ideas and engage in various cultural, social and sports activities. The Festival would be re-structured to meet the needs of the times.
5. State Governments would be encouraged to organise various activities in the festival according to specific themes. The themes would be allocated by draw of lots each year. Themes that are important in the current context would be selected annually. For instance, 'Youth as Job Creators', 'Mission Life', 'Science for Society' are some of the themes which could be considered. Stalls and Cultural activities would also focus on such themes. Cultural events like folk dance and folk song in individual and group categories would continue.
6. Each state would then proceed to conduct competitions at district level and state level to identify the best youth entries for the National Festival. Such a program would help maximise participation in the Festival and encourage youth to share their experiences with others.

7. A given Timetable for the festival activities would be followed so that all events could be planned and youth given due time for preparation.

Particulars	Month
Identification of Themes and Allotment of themes to the States	April
Finalization of Non-Competitive Events/Activities	May
District Level /State Level events on the noncompetitive and competitive events by State Govt on the allotted themes	July - September
Identification of Success Stories around the allotted theme	October
Finalization of State Contingent	November

National Youth Parliament Festival

8. The National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) is an important event that recognizes and spreads awareness about the contribution of youth in various sectors in India. The objective of the NYPF is to hear the voices of the youth on matters of public policy. The first National Youth Parliament Festival was held in 2019. The 4th edition of the National Youth. Parliament Festival, 2023 was launched with the theme, “Ideas for a Better tomorrow: India for the World”. The NYPF draws huge youth participation and the District Youth Parliaments witness lakhs of youth participants from 748 districts of all States/UTs. The Youth Parliament Festival also encourages the process of developing prospective youth leaders for the country. The Policy proposes to take the Parliament Festival to block level by 2030. Such a festival would be held at each block at least once in two years.

Youth Policy would institutionalize Public forums for Youth

9. Participation in youth leadership programs has been shown to yield numerous positive outcomes for young people, such as an increase in positive attitudes and behaviors like motivation, academic achievement, building self-esteem, problem-solving, positive health decisions, and interpersonal skills. These programs also have been shown to reduce negative behavior. Further, such programs help young people develop essential skills relevant to success in adulthood and the workplace, such as ability to take balanced decisions and teamwork abilities. Building self-advocacy and self-determination skills, which is a crucial aspect of leadership development for

youth with disabilities, has been found to be closely linked to successful transitions to adulthood.

10. Public forums for expressing opinions need to be strengthened. These create opportunities for dialogue with the youth across different verticals viz., students, professionals and self-employed youth on issues of public policy and share those views with public policy makers. Secondly, mentors who willingly volunteer to give their time for the youth, need to be given proper support and mentorship networks need to be promoted through a registry of mentors.

The Youth 20 engagement group

10. Youth has also been an important engagement group in G-20. India being the host country for G20 during 2023, Youth 20 (Y20) is providing a consultation forum for youth from all G20 member countries to be able to exchange views and share experiences with each other. Y20 encourages youth as future leaders to raise awareness of global issues, exchange ideas, argue, negotiate, and reach consensus. The Policy would set up institutional mechanism for sharing of knowledge and facilitating the building up of youth networks that are global in scope. This would be in keeping with the Indian tradition of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam which sees the whole world as one family.

International Youth Exchange Programs

11. The Department of Youth Affairs endeavours to create an international perspective among youth in collaboration with other countries and international agencies/organizations on various youth issues. Under this programme, exchange of Youth Delegations with friendly countries is taken up on reciprocal basis for promoting exchange of ideas, values and culture amongst the youth of different countries and also to provide exposure and promote international perspective. The Department has signed 25 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with different countries on Youth Exchange and other Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are being explored. Of these, regular exchange programmes are being organized with 14 countries namely China, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal,

Palestine, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tunisia and Vietnam. The strength of the delegations exchanged with different countries ranges from 10 to 200. The duration of the visit of incoming/outgoing delegation ranges between 7-10 days. The Policy proposes to continue this activity and also to provide an institutional basis.

Building a School of Leadership to train young leaders

12. The Policy would develop a School for Leadership at the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Chennai. This school would build an educational program specially designed to train young leaders for politics and governance through experiential learning. The school would only be for graduates. The criteria for identifying students for this course would include evidence of a desire to shape society for the better and to work for the common good. Academic criteria would only be one part of the benchmark for selection. Applicants would need to show a willingness to learn from experience and an ability to show independence in thought and action.
13. The course would be driven by the concepts of self-directed learning rather than teaching. The selected students would be required to design their own curriculum and research projects. A key component of the program would be the experiential mode of learning in which the students would be required to work with different kinds of organisations and also leaders including but not limited to:
 - a. Houses of Parliament
 - b. Elected Members of Parliament, Union Ministers
 - c. Community-Based Organisations/Social Enterprises
 - d. Business and Industry
14. In order to inculcate a global perspective, at least one internship with an organizations outside India would be a part of the program.
15. Such a program emphasises the importance of youth-led development and regards youth as active drivers of change rather than passive recipients.

Activity Roadmap

15. To actualize the objective i.e. “youth as leaders of change”, the activity roadmap for the next decade is as under:

Objective	Activity	Metrics for achievement
To act as leaders of change	<p>Institutionalize public forums where youth can articulate their voices and connect these with policymaking</p> <p>Globalise public forums where youth can articulate their voices and connect these with policymaking and evaluate impact of policies on youth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To conduct regular dialogues with youth across different verticals- students, professionals and self-employed youth on issues of public policy and share those views with policy makers. 2. To conduct youth parliaments at block level once in every two years. 3. India can institutionalize public forums for youth, bringing together people from diverse professional backgrounds, where international voices can also find a place. Each state in the country should have one such public forum of international stature.
To train leaders in politics and governance	Build a School of Leadership that trains young people who show a dedication to working for the common good and an ability to lead others	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Build and execute a program for training young leaders who would be equipped for the task for building a new India.

CHAPTER 5

TO ENCOURAGE A CULTURE OF FITNESS AND A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

An important goal of Youth Policy is to encourage a culture of fitness among youth with the mantra of “fitness ki dose adha ghanta roz”. Fitness refers to the physical and mental ability of an individual to carry out daily tasks without undue fatigue and with ample energy left over for leisure and recreational activities. Health, on the other hand, refers to a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Fitness and health are closely related because regular physical activity and a healthy lifestyle are important factors in achieving and maintaining good health. The Youth Policy would take steps to encourage a culture of fitness and support institutional mechanisms for encouraging sports at different levels and counselling for good mental health.

Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles

1. There are several ways to inculcate a healthy lifestyle for the young population. Youth should be encouraged to spend more time outdoors in physical activity and less time in front of screens. Secondly, we must promote healthy eating habits and teach the youth about balanced nutrition and encourage them to make healthy food choices. Provide healthy snacks and meals at home and encourage them to pack healthy snacks when they are on-the-go. Third, promote stress management. Teach young people healthy ways to manage stress, such as exercise, meditation, or deep breathing exercises. Encourage them to take breaks and engage in relaxing activities. Four, educate about the dangers of substance abuse. Teach youth about the dangers of substance abuse and encourage them to avoid alcohol, tobacco, and other harmful substances. Finally, create a supportive environment. They must have access to an environment where healthy choices are easy and accessible. This includes providing safe places to exercise, and access to social support mechanisms.

Sports Competitions and Fitness Camps

2. As regards integration of sports and fitness in daily life and creating a culture of physical fitness, a regimen of physical exercise and playing some sports regularly, needs to

be developed among youth. The Department of Sports which is a sister department facilitates development of necessary sports infrastructure. To supplement their efforts, the Department of Youth Affairs would encourage the organisation of various sports & fitness activities such as sports competitions, yoga sessions, fitness camps etc. through the field organisations of the Department.

NSS and Fit India Movement

3. Launched in 2019, the Fit India Movement aims to encourage people of all ages to adopt a more active and healthy lifestyle. The initiative includes various programs and activities such as fitness challenges, sports events, and yoga sessions. The campaign also has initiatives such as the Fit India School Certification Program, which aims to promote fitness and physical activity in schools across the country. As of March 2021, over 31,000 schools had registered for the program, and over 15,000 schools had been certified as Fit India Schools. The NSS would work with the Fit India Movement to encourage more and more schools to join the program.

NYKS support for Athletic Youth Clubs

4. Many local athletic clubs and organizations offer fitness and sports programs for young people. These programs include activities such as running, swimming, and basketball, and are designed to encourage young people to lead an active lifestyle.

Setting up a Talent Registry for Sports

5. A talent registry of sportspersons shall be created based on the competitive sports meets/ activities held at local and district levels so that local talents get opportunities to grow and flourish at national and international levels in future.

Encourage greater physical activity in Schools

6. The Department of Youth Affairs would collaborate with the Department of School Education to help create more opportunities for physical activity in schools. The focus would be on organizing after-school sports programs, youth fitness classes, and community fitness events. NCC is great step in this regard. The Government would also encourage children to walk, bike, or take public transportation to school instead of private

vehicles. This can help promote physical activity and reduce air pollution. In this respect, the government would also partner with community organizations, such as non-profits, sports clubs etc., to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles in children.

Adventure Sports- NPYAD Program

7. Adventure activities can create and foster amongst the youth a spirit of risk-taking, cooperative team work, and develop the ability to respond to challenging situations, and capacity for physical and mental endurance. This also provides a creative and happy outlet for the abundant energy, enthusiasm and imagination of youth. The National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development (NPYAD) scheme specially intends to serve the first-generation learners and youth both in urban and rural areas with particular thrust on young people in the rural areas. This scheme also intends to create and strengthen institutional structures to support adventure programs. Funds are released under the NPYAD scheme to organizations engaged in promoting adventure activities amongst Youths such as Indian Mountaineering Federation (IMF), Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI), Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports (JIMWS) and National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS) and similar Institutes.

Adventure Sports Awards

8. To encourage and honor persons associated with adventure activities, Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award (TNNAA) Awards are conferred annually under the NPYAD Scheme in four categories namely, 1) Land Adventure, 2) Water (Sea) Adventure, 3) Air Adventure and 4) Life Time Achievement for adventure activities on Land, Sea and Air. Ordinarily, one award each is conferred for adventure activities on land, sea and air. In addition, a provision has also been made for giving one award for 'Life Time Achievement' in the field of Adventure. These awards are proposed to be continued in this policy as well.

A holistic system of health care with a focus on mental health

9. The Youth Policy recognizes that holistic development and mental well-being of youth requires institutional mechanisms for regular counselling and stress management. Further, the youth from the disadvantaged and marginalised communities may face challenges in accessing quality healthcare. Given the challenges faced in a highly competitive education system and a highly competitive work environment, many youth

today may face serious mental health issues. The National Youth Policy envisages providing support to a system that can provide regular counselling for better mental health.

Regular Counselling & Stress Management Sessions

10. Similarly, for retaining a healthy state of mind, the activities such as meditation sessions, counselling programs, stress management workshops, etc. are required to be conducted regularly. A system for funding the counselling workshops in this regard needs to be evolved. Other measures for raising a healthy generation of youth include creating awareness about healthy & balanced diet, nutrition and precautionary health care.

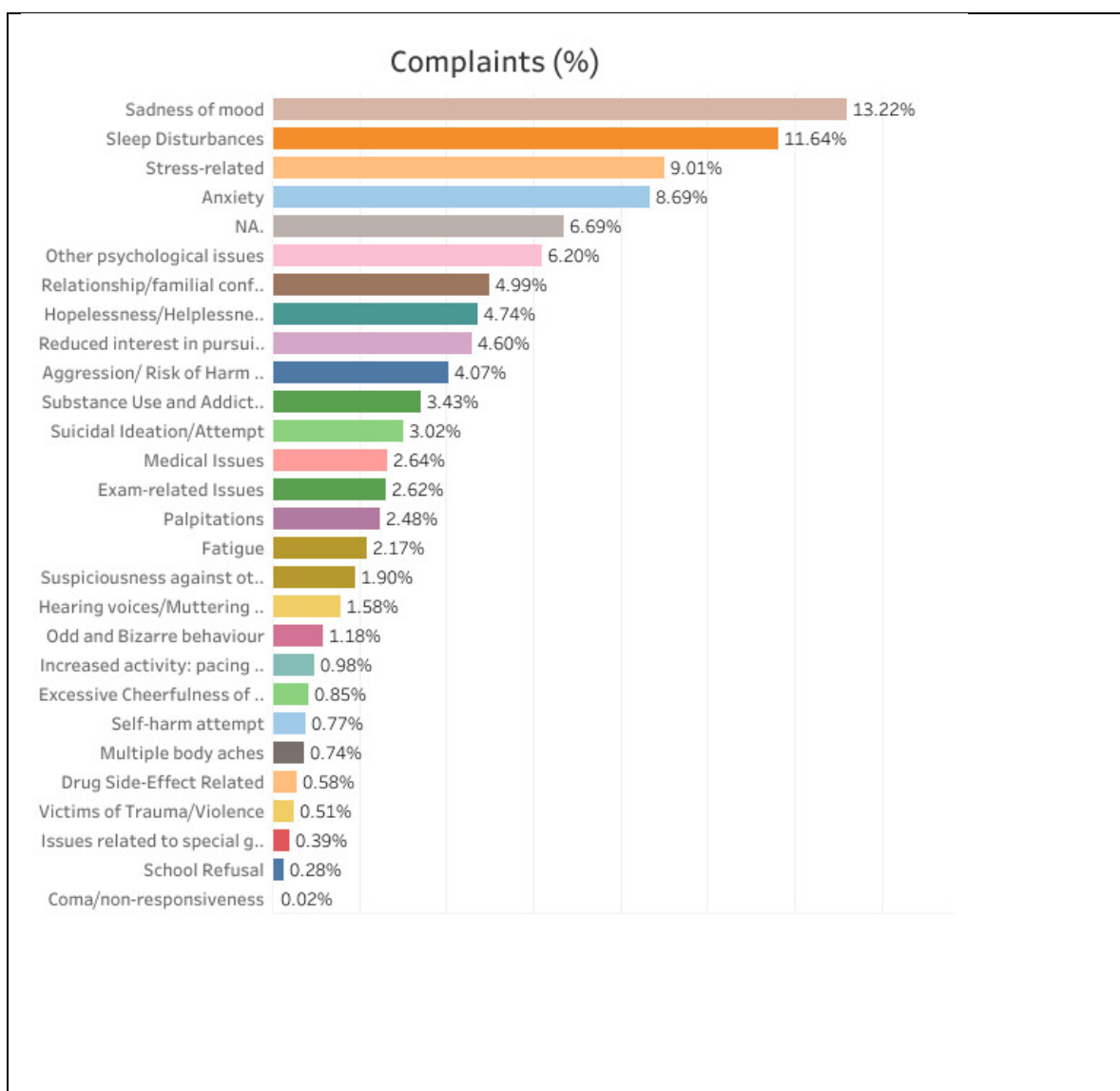
Case study 6: Tele MANAS at NIMHANS

The National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) is an Institute of National Importance governed by the act of Parliament titled NIMHANS Act, 2012. NIMHANS has made significant progress and is **a centre for excellence in mental health and neuroscience** in the country.

The aims and objectives of NIMHANS include the development of health education materials for both professionals and non-professionals in the field of Mental Health; and to extend Integrative Medicine services to both community oriented and community-based services.

The community psychiatry team provides training for different cadres of health care workers including medical officers, de-addiction counsellors, ASHA workers in primary care psychiatry for the States of Punjab, Karnataka, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand.

Tele MANAS was launched on 10th October 2022 as a tele counselling service. The project covers over 600 districts in 25 states. Eventually, NIMHANS aims to make this a 24/7 service in each State/UT. Till date, Tele MANAS has serviced more than 1.5 lakh callers from across the country. Over 1000 calls are received per day. A break up of common complaints received is given below.



Activity Roadmap

16. To encourage a culture of fitness and health life style, the activity Roadmap for the next decade is as under:

Objective	Activity	Metrics for achievement
To be mentally fit and physically healthy	Improve health, fitness and facilitate building of sports culture among youth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To set up a talent registry for sportspersons which could be used as a database for Sports and Athletics Federations. 2. To support Adventure Sports Organisations to organize

Objective	Activity	Metrics for achievement
		<p>adventure expeditions in all district of the country.</p> <p>3. To fund counselling systems to improve the mental health of youth.</p>

CHAPTER 6

SUMMING UP

1. Swami Vivekananda viewed the youth of India as a strong link to a glorious past and a grand future. Vivekananda used to say that all power is within us, we must call upon that power. Youth must believe that they can do everything. This Youth Policy focuses on equipping the youth of the country to develop a belief in oneself and to act on that belief to help in the great task of building a new India.
2. Today's young generations are tomorrow's innovators, creators, builders and leaders. This Policy focuses on building supportive mechanisms that would help youth to translate their ideas into action, to provide them appropriate counselling and mentorship so that they could become economically productive and socially responsible citizens.
3. By using digital tools and by strengthening community engagement pathways, the Policy would help youth to acquire new-age skills, re-learning of conventional skills and learn soft skills to meet the needs of the changing market.
4. The Policy would supplement conventional learning in formal education with self-acquired learning through engagement with local businesses and farms. Youth would be encouraged to help others at the same time by helping them to learn digital tools.
5. Youth would be encouraged to learn about the cultures, languages and traditions practised by people in other parts of the nation. By strengthening institutional mechanisms for cultural exchange programs like Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, youth would work to strengthen the social fabric and respect difference.
6. In addition to acquiring the new age skills, the youth have to be physically and mentally strong to withstand the cultural shocks arriving from these changes. This policy has acknowledged the importance of physical and psychological wellbeing of each individual youth.
7. The Policy has further emphasized the need to become socially responsible citizens who care for the community and the natural environment. They are also expected to build an inclusive society where all groups have a just and respectable space in the society. Such all-round engagement of the youth will help them to act as powerful agents of social mobilization to build a new India.

8. The Policy would train young leaders for the tasks of politics and governance so that they could become transformational leaders.
9. The policy has also outlined the activity roadmap along with the metrics against which the achievements and progress are to be measured. It emphasizes use of digital tools to reach out to youth, to equip them for the digital age and at the same time to build monitoring mechanisms to assess how these tasks are being achieved. The detailed activity sub-plans will flow from the broadly defined activity roadmap specified in this policy.
10. The Department of Youth Affairs would work with all stakeholders to realise the goals stated in this policy. Using the principles of Jan Bhagidaari, the Department would work to empower the youth of the nation to build a new India in the Amrit Kaal of independence.
