

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2018/2023

DRAFT OBJECTIVE AGENDA

Funding

1. There needs to be some form of prioritization with regards to funding. Assessments should be carried out to identify priority projects and initiatives and these should be A-listed with regards to available funding.
2. A look at the national budget highlights the disparity between other programmes and those geared towards youth development. If we are truly serious about youth development, then there has to be greater equity in the distribution of resources to allow for better youth programmes.
3. A percentage of budget allocations should also be put aside for youth assistance initiatives.
4. Community programmes need to be reintroduced and there has to be a measure of talent identification for further development emanating out of these programmes. Additionally funding for these programmes need to be prioritized, especially as it relates to rural communities.
5. Funding for youth groups, youth programmes and initiatives has to be increased and made accessible by said youth groups and administrators.
6. There needs to be more consistent funding especially to the YDAC's to enable the smooth operations as well as to those persons enrolled to maintain themselves whilst they develop.
7. Funding needs to be made available for social programmes, and greater equality needs to be exercised as it relates to budgeting for sport and youth in Trinidad and Tobago.
8. The subvention that was originally discusses with regards to the Tobago youth council should be paid. It was suggested that \$200,000.00 be the figure.

Communication

1. Use of technology for information exchange and dissemination.
2. Government has to embark on a population sensitization campaign to educate the nation in an effort to eliminate the stigma that is attached to certain courses offered by the government. Most person attach negative connotations to persons who subscribe to particular courses owing to the perceived notion behind them.
3. There is a need for greater information sharing amongst communities and youth organizations. In most instances programmes and other initiatives are not properly communicated to everyone, and information regarding accessing particular information is lacking
4. The public has to be sensitized so as to prevent stereotyping of youth. They should understand that youth have different personalities, attitudes and behaviors thus any deviation from the norm does not constitute delinquent behavior etc.
5. There is a general lack of communication as well as responses to requests for funding emanating from the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs. There should be open communication and timely feedback with regards to the status of funding requests and applications for same.
6. There is a disconnect between the operations of the MSYA and the communities and community groups. Information does not readily flow out to communities and knowledge of programmes and other youth initiatives is almost unheard of in certain communities.
7. There has to be greater communication and distribution of youth opportunities. In most instances the information is directed at particular channels and a select few are purview to it. In an effort to truly engage youth, information with regards to youth opportunities needs to be communicated through all channels.
8. The national youth policy, specifically the objectives of the policy needs to be properly communicated so that the nation knows what we are aiming for so that they can buy into the vision and participate in the achievement of the objectives.
9. There is an overreliance on conventional communication mechanisms to disperse information when these mediums do not reach and in some cases aren't relevant to rural communities. Instead the MSYA should adopt the medium of mic-ing rural communities with regards to information dissemination.

Engagement

1. Reintroduction of village Olympics and territorial games to increase cohesiveness and help with youth engagement.
2. Lack of community engagement. There are no community activities planned or executed that seeks to bring the community together.
3. There is a need to have more summer and other camps which seeks to engage youth in communities. Camps are not sustained and therefore some form of continuity needs to be had as it relates to ongoing summer and vacation camps.
4. There needs to be early engagement of youth beyond the 12-29 age group. Children as young as 3 years need to be engaged to prevent them falling into the traps that come with aging.
5. There needs to be early engagement of youth to prevent delinquency and gang involvement.
6. Just as youth need to be educated, parents of youth also need to be educated. Thus parental education should be a priority.
7. There needs to be mechanisms and/or programmes which cater to parents of youth to get them involved and bring them together so that both groups are educated and can thus enjoy greater progress.
8. No arts and crafts programmes to engage those individuals who are not attracted to or impressed by physical activities such as sport.
9. There is a general lack of tolerance and patience with youth. Parents and elders need to be sensitized on the needs of youth and how to deal with young persons, identifying the difference in cultures etc.
10. There has to be some level of parental engagement that accompanies youth engagement. Parents need to be taught in the mannerisms as well as youth so that youth have the level of support at home. This is specifically important in sport programmes where parents need to encourage their children and show their support by turning out for games etc.
11. There needs to be an investment in community and school youth forums to give youth a platform to voice their concerns. Most times youth aren't given an opportunity to voice their concerns or speak on matters that relate to their development. If we are truly pro youth development, then youth must be given these platforms whether at school or in the community to speak out.
12. The MSYA needs to invest in community youth councilors in an effort to increase youth participation. Just as there are area councilors, then there has to be a youth arm to this institutional framework to foster youth mainstreaming.
13. Sport should be exploited as a youth engagement tool. It has been proven the effects that sport has on youth and how beneficial it can be at curbing disruptive and other unwanted behaviors. There has to be an introduction of sport programmes especially at the community level so that youth can be made to be productive and not disruptive.

14. A conscientious effort must be made to fix the mindset of today's youth. Youth need to learn and understand the basic values which will instill in them a sense of pride and belonging as well as responsibility.
15. A youth mitigation strategy should be adopted. It should involve consultations or a youth mitigation consultation should be hosted and topics such as teenage pregnancy, crime and other relevant issues can be discussed.
16. The issue of stigmatization of youth has to be looked at, as youth should not have to hide their identity to conform to societal standards. Additionally, we need to find innovative ways to engage youth. The current engagement models are not working so new and innovative ways need to be identified in that regard.
17. The concept of regional coordinators has to be adopted in an effort to mobilize youth in various communities and regions.
18. There should be an emphasis placed on development and life skills programmes for communities to assist with youth engagement and development.
19. MSYA should reintroduce the concept of the village Olympics. This brings about cohesiveness among communities and helps to highlight or showcase community talent.
20. Community integration programmes that seek to introduce youth to the hierarchy of the community needs to be developed and implemented.
21. There needs to be a rejuvenation of cultural activities in Trinidad and Tobago. We have lost many of our cultural groups and the interest of youth along with it. We need to bring back these activities and get the youth involved.
22. Quarterly youth forums should be adopted to facilitate youth engagement. There should be mass gatherings of youth to both encourage, and assure them that they are not forgotten, as well as gathering feedback on issues affecting them.
23. We need to go back to the spiritual, and utilize religion as a tool for youth engagement. We have removed religion from schools, paving the way for lawlessness. We need to return religion to schools especially and utilize the spiritual to appeal to youth
24. Youth groups should be registered with the Ministry and support given to those registered groups in an effort to aid in the community initiatives.
25. There needs to be greater engagement of communities by youth and sport officers who are assigned to these communities. Most times these officers spend time at offices and never bother to engage the communities they are tasked with serving.
26. Greater engagement of rural communities is needed as they are most often overlooked because of the geographic location.
27. The previous policy states that youth begins from 12-29, however youth need to be engaged prior to the age of 12 so that they can be properly developed. Thus there needs to be pre-youth engagement within the society to assist with youth progression.
28. There needs to be greater engagement of youth with regards to sexuality and sexual reproduction, identifying with the fact that youth of today are starting to be sexually active at earlier ages.
29. There needs to be a re-establishment of the National Youth Council of Trinidad and Tobago. As it stands now, there is a Tobago Youth Council and a Trinidad Youth

Council. There needs to be a drive to reestablish the National Youth Council so that youth have that representation and support.

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Programmes and Projects

1. Drug use is prevalent in the community, thus programmes need to be implemented to sensitize children in the community on the dangers of drug usage.
2. There is a need to have programmes and initiatives that encourage parental and adult involvement in the lives of youth.
3. There is a noticeable absence of programmes at the community level for children with special needs and differently-abled individuals. There should be programmes which cater to said individual and their parents.
4. There needs to be vocational and other supplementary courses made available to persons below the age of 16, as most of the courses available are specifically for 16 and above age groups, whilst a number of youth who are below that age don't have any courses which they can access.
5. There needs to be some kind of literacy programme developed for youth from 3 years and above, recognizing that everyone's capabilities are different and that this is the prime time to impact the lives of those children to foster lifelong learning.
6. There needs to be a greater dispersion of vocational courses across Trinidad and Tobago, specifically in the rural communities and districts.
7. There should be sustainable programmes and there must be continuity across programme offerings. Programmes are implemented however they are done once a term and there is no continuity with regards to giving programme participants the opportunity to use the skills imparted. Additionally programmes are not consistent leading to persons dropping off or losing interest in same.
8. There has to be an investment in life-skills programmes for youth as too much emphasis is placed on academics and vocational skills and not those that will help them cope or manage adulthood.
9. Service delivery as it relates to vocational programmes is an issue. In most instances courses are not held consistently and there is always issues with communicating information to potential registrants. Additionally when programmes are operational, there is always an issue with payment of stipends which hampers course participants as some of them depend on the stipends to attend the courses.
10. There also needs to be more preparatory programmes to assist youth in making the transition to either tertiary or other level programmes. Example SAT classes to assist youth in preparing to take same.

11. There needs to be a public sensitization campaign treating with how to deal with criminal elements. Many communities face this scourge but unfortunately many persons don't know how to deal with it and what they can do if anything about it. Government then needs to host programmes and other initiatives which seeks to let persons know what options they have.
12. There is too much focus on academics which does not cater to youth who are not academically inclined but who may excel vocationally. There has to be more programmes aimed at facilitating youth entrepreneurship as well as training in entrepreneurship. Many of the rural areas depend on farming and other entrepreneurial activities. Youth can be trained in that regard to take advantage of same.
13. The youth camps need to be reintroduced as well as youth mentorship programmes. Previous programmes had a resounding impact on youth during their time and were discontinued. These programmes and initiatives need to be reintroduced into the current framework.
14. There is a need for the decentralization of youth programmes and the creation of rover units to capture youths who are outside of the youth catchment areas. In most instances programmes do not reach rural and other communities, cutting you out from access etc. thus decentralizing and utilizing a community based approach will allow for greater participation and engagement.
15. Many schools nationally are labelled as problem schools. Instead of ignoring those schools, government should employ school intervention programmes to assist those schools in combating the problems they face with respect to the enrolled youth. Teachers also need assistance with regards to dealing with problematic youths and the adaptation of a humanity approach, utilizing love and care as opposed to punishment.
16. There needs to be structured sport programmes introduced at the YDAC's. Currently the emphasis is on vocational programme without any sport input. Given the growth of the sport industry and the sensitization of using physical activity to combat lifestyle diseases, then these programmes should be introduced at these facilities.
17. Various programmes and interventions need to be developed for persons with behavioral problems. Many times authorities wait until these behaviors become critical before stepping in when a proactive approach would have negated the problems.
18. Additionally the locations of vocational and other institutions needs to be revisited and put into a national framework for equitable distribution of same.
19. Programme should seek to engage youth and infiltrate youth groups and the wider youth community. The said programmes should also be aligned with the needs of youth to facilitate participation and enrollment.
20. Various programmes need to be developed and implemented for youth which takes them from Secondary school to adulthood. There should be a full spectrum of programmes with continuity and that are sustainable.
21. Programmes need to be developed for parents of youth that should run concurrent with youth programmes to assist bridge the divide which exists between youth and parents as well as to help young parents cope with youth issues.

22. After school programmes need to be developed for youth in an effort to combat crime and delinquency. Between the hours of 3- 7/8 most youth are unoccupied making them subject to delinquent and criminal activity. If we create those programmes that can keep them occupied within that time period, then the chances of them falling prey to these behaviors will be lessened.
23. More programmes and activities need to be conceptualized, and implemented, that aim to build youth confidence and help them grow into responsible young adults.
24. The adoption of technology for programme delivery and access.
25. Government needs to institute programmes which address at risk youth in Trinidad and Tobago. Many at risk youth are not tabled on policy agendas and are treated as outcasts. Special provisions must be made for those youth to engage them before they become problematic or are engaged by negative parties.
26. Government needs to work closely with community youth groups and provide assistance in the form of entrepreneurship training to reduce the dependency on government for funding.
27. There needs to be transition with regards to the programmes being offered by the government. Most programmes only have one module or level. There should be development of programmes where persons can follow on to get level 2 and level 3 qualification.
28. A needs assessment needs to be undertaken to identify the needs of every community, which would then inform programme development as a matter of priority as well as to have evidenced based programs and projects instituted.
29. There needs to be gender specific programmes especially for women and girls. Programmes to teach them about etiquette as well as the mannerisms that are particular to their sexual orientation.
30. Emphasis needs to be placed on parental-youth relationships, to enable parents to give children the right guidance and to understand and better raise children in a changing world. Youth on the other hand need training to help them understand the issues parents face, thus programmes need to be developed for families to assist in bringing back family cohesiveness.
31. The national youth policy should be mainstreamed across Ministries so that all services and institutions are linked by the common goal and to ensure that every project is aligned to the achievement of the policy objectives.
32. A development strategy needs to be developed for the prescribed age groups as per policy, showing the progression and the interventions along the timeline that will assist them throughout the transition period.
33. There needs to be greater inter-ministerial collaborations as it relates to youth development and programme planning and implementation.
34. The state should make use of uniformed services to educate youth as well as institute school units for officers of the various uniformed services.
35. Implemented programmes should have assessable objectives such as the number of participants and the value of the programmes. Far too often programmes are implemented without any kind of measure of success or performance.

36. There needs to be a national effort to remove the stigma attached/associated with vocational programmes. Most of the population associates vocational programmes with individuals who perform poorly at the academic level. This has to change as vocational programmes are the optimal route towards youth internship.
37. A relevant implementation plan should be developed in conjunction with the National Youth Policy to facilitate the successful implementation of initiatives.
38. Pre youth advocacy programmes need to be adopted to assist youth in identifying with youth groups and the national youth mandate.
39. Government needs to reintroduce the YAPA programme. The Agricultural sector is a booming economy with new innovation and is a prime candidate for youth entrepreneurship, thus the reintroduction of the programme will go a long way in facilitating youth development and advocacy. Additionally MSYA can partner with the Min. of Agriculture to engage in programme planning as well as youth expos with regards to agricultural competitions.
40. Persons within the community need to be trained and empowered to undertake tasks which facilitate the development of the community. Thus courses and other vocational skills need to be hosted for said individuals.
41. There should be vocational programmes designed specifically for rural communities to assist youth with entrepreneurship opportunities.
42. professional grooming programmes to assist youth in their personal development.
43. Special education offerings as it relates to courses and programmes should be offered that are suited to the communities to which they are offered. This takes into consideration the demographic for example communities in central Trinidad which are largely agricultural based may require agriculture courses etc., whilst communities such as Cedros, Mayaro which are fishing based can benefit from courses in fishing etc.
44. Programmes need to be developed that are geared towards the development of young men and implemented at the school level to encourage and mentor them.
45. There is a need for the decentralization of youth programmes and the creation of rover units to capture youths who are outside of the youth catchment areas. In most instances programmes do not reach rural and other communities, cutting you out from access etc. thus decentralizing and utilizing a community based approach will allow for greater participation and engagement.
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Research & Data Collection

1. There needs to be some kind of social monitoring structure enacted to provide insight to the government on those social interventions which are working and those which are not, additionally it should seek to inform the government as to what interventions are needed and within which communities they are needed most.
2. There needs to be research conducted nationally into the human resource needs of the country. This would help address the situation with youth unemployment. If we know the deficient professions then we can study these professions and thus increase our chances of obtaining jobs. The ministry of education or ministry of labour needs to undertake such a study and publish the finding locally.
3. A needs assessment needs to be conducted across all communities to identify what is needed before government endeavors to create programmes or implement any plans aimed at youth development.
4. There needs to be an information sharing facility or database in Trinidad and Tobago. The MSYA should also embark on contact sharing so that groups know where they can access assistance and other services which they may need.
5. An assessment needs to be conducted on all facilities to evaluate their status and level of functionality and operability.
6. Market research needs to be conducted on youth in Trinidad and Tobago towards developing a national youth policy.
7. Greater monitoring and evaluation has to occur across youth projects, programmes and initiatives. Post implementation evaluations or assessments need to be conducted to assess the impact or effectiveness of youth development interventions.
8. Research needs to be conducted on youth to provide data and statistics on youth integration and other aspects of youth in Trinidad and Tobago.
9. There has to be more research conducted into where facilities are built. Rural areas need to be developed as opposed to those urban areas which have duplication of facilities.
10. Data collection in support of youth work and youth initiatives is nonexistent and there is a general dearth of data available on local youth groups, cultures and activities. Data collection much be made a priority as well as access to that data by youth groups and other organizations.
11. A registration process needs to be undertaken to effect a national youth group register in Trinidad and Tobago.
12. The MSYA should take into account the SDG's when developing the youth policy to ensure that global youth perspectives are on the agenda for implementation as well as to make the policy relevant.
13. There needs to be some research conducted in the youth drop-out rate at the primary and secondary school levels in Trinidad and Tobago. A number of youth across the nation are dropping out of school and this is going on unchecked with no formal statistics to gauge the rate at which this is happening.

14. Trinidad and Tobago has a high suicide rate amongst youth, we need to monitor those statistics as well as develop a counselling plan as well as a strategy to combat mental health issues amongst youth in the country.
15. There needs to be research conducted and a register developed identifying the types of grants and loans that can be accessed by NGO's and same should be circulated or available for access at MSYA.
16. An assessment needs to be conducted or a comparative analysis to look at the achievements of international youth versus those of local youths. It's a case where internationally youth are challenged to achieve and foster their development, whilst locally they are stifled in their attempts to work for their own benefit.
17. The practice of drop-off boxes should be adopted for schools to allow students indicate the programmes that they would like to have access to without fear of retribution or persecution. Collaboration can ensue between the ministry of education and the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs to host one-day guidance sessions from the drop box from and for schools.
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Collaboration

1. Inter-ministerial collaboration.
2. Interconnectedness of policy across various ministries.
3. There is need for greater community collaboration as well as community organization collaboration. Many groups in communities do the same work so coming together will increase the chances of success.
4. There needs to be more collaboration between the NGO's which operate at the communal as well as the national level. Resources need to be shared and networks linked in an effort to maximize the effectiveness of their operations.
5. There is a need for greater collaboration at the level of government and Ministries with the responsibility for youth and community development.
6. There must be greater collaboration between the ministry and the community clubs and groups. Ministries should partner with community groups and clubs to facilitate community competitions etc.
7. There needs to be a drive by the MSYA to mobilize youth groups in Trinidad and Tobago.
8. There is a need for MSYA to collaborate with other ministries with regard to providing new and/or access to existing infrastructure in communities. In most instances community youth groups have difficulty accessing community centres and sporting arenas as well as other such venues to host meetings etc. Collaborating with other ministries and organizations can result in easier access being granted to such groups in future.
9. There needs to be more collaboration between the Ministry of national security and policy in an effort to effect safe youth spaces in communities around Trinidad and Tobago. Youth should feel comfortable and not have to fear for their safety at centres and other places of interest so there needs to be this collaborations to make these places safe for our children.
10. Organizations need to collaborate more to provide assistance to youth. There needs to be more inter-agency collaboration with regards to youth development.
11. MSYA should engage in MOU's and other collaborative engagements for assistance in the development of youth development initiatives.
12. There needs to be an alignment of institutional projects and programmes. Far too often we have too many government institutions operating independently of each other. There needs to be an alignment of operations which would serve to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
13. Access to community development for use of facilities as well as to access grants needs to be simplified. Most times the process is cumbersome and youth groups and individuals get lost in the bureaucracy.
14. Greater relationships should be forged with commonwealth youth groups to ensure alignment of policies, mainstreaming of youth development initiatives as well as collaborations on other ventures which seek to support youth development.

15. There needs to be more collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry or sport and youth affairs as it relates to youth development. Both Ministries have an integral role to play and as such should work more closely together.
16. MSYA should play a more critical role and spearhead the initiative of having greater interaction between the Ministry, the youth population and schools
17. There needs to be an alignment of youth services in the public and private sector. Services and programmes are not aligned to each other as they should be. If greater emphasis is place on this alignment, then greater utility can be derived from same.
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Definition of Youth

Push back the definition of youth to include 9 year olds.

1. Youth identity is a burning issue. What or who identifies as a youth, needs to be defined and also persons need to be made aware of that identity. In most instances adults try to superimpose their version of an identity on youth, not realizing that each person's identity is distinct. Thus we need to assist persons in identifying their identity and respecting those of youth especially.
2. There has to be an amendment made to the age range definition of a youth. The age group has to include persons 29 and over as by today's measure these are still considered youth as they are young adults making the transition into adulthood.
3. There has to be a lowering of the age definition of a youth. Most youth need interventions prior to the stipulated age, thus we must take into account the pre youth years and lower the age specification to include the 7-12 age groups.
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Leadership, Mentorship and Training

1. The institution of community youth councils to assist in giving leadership to youth in communities, with integration into the national youth councils.
2. Youth need to be sensitized on the issue of self-esteem and taking pride in themselves and how they conduct themselves in public and otherwise. As such there needs to be some kind of training available to them in the areas of building self-esteem, self-confidence, efficacy and social integration training.
3. There needs to be some form of environmental training for youth, so that they can learn to better care for the environment within which they live and operate, in addition to which the training should also incorporate self-development and self-care.
4. There is a need for social services for youth with regards to career guidance and planning. This service is lacking and should be a priority as it relates to giving youth advice towards building a future for themselves.
5. Discipline amongst young women aged 11-16 years of age is a problem faced locally. There needs to be community based programmes for young women in communities to teach them people's skills as well as other life skills so they learn to respect themselves, dress appropriately and above all value themselves.
6. Parental support and training needs to be addressed as it makes no sense to invest in youth and they don't get the support needed to nurture that investment at home. Parents need to be trained and assisted in developing the skill necessary to treat with youth who are undergoing development or making transitions in life.
7. There should be more career days hosted as well as career planning workshops. Many youth aspire to be and do great things however they need that advice or a roadmap that they must follow to start. Career days and planning workshops can point them in the right direction.
8. Youth today are lacking proper role models, father figures and mentors. These were staples in the past so youth grew up knowing how to act because they had persons to show them how. This is sadly lacking of late so government needs to reintroduce these ideals as well as guidance facilitators at the community level to help give youth some direction and purpose.
9. There needs to be accompanying adult support for youth development. Parents especially need to be made to understand the value of the programmes and initiatives so that they can both encourage and support their children. This can take the form of vocational programmes as well as other initiatives that foster parental involvement.
10. Youth leadership opportunities are lacking in Trinidad and Tobago. On many forums most individuals address youth leadership however don't offer any opportunities for those same youth to lead. If we want youth leaders, then there must be opportunities presented to the youth that will allow them to do so.
11. There needs to be pathways established to facilitate youth in national service. Many youth aspire to be leaders or ambassadors however they don't know how or have a roadmap to follow. We need to create these pathways for youth so they can aspire and work to achieve this.

12. A conscientious effort must be made to fix the mindset of today's youth. Youth need to learn and understand the basic values which will instill in them a sense of pride and belonging as well as responsibility.
13. Government can institute big brother and big sister programmes to assist youth and provide much needed guidance to youth.
14. Hosting of career days as well as job counselling for youth is needed as many youth don't have any idea as to what they want to be or how to go about being that future version of themselves. Career days will expose them to the various professions that exist as they grow, job counselling will assist them in making the right career choices.
15. There needs to be dissemination of information on essential services and training for youth. Most persons don't know the basics of applying for their ID, license, managing etc. thus training in these life skills will go a long way in empowering and enriching the lives of the youth.
16. Government needs to work closely with community youth groups and provide assistance in the form of entrepreneurship training to reduce the dependency on government for funding.
17. Additionally more needs to be done to groom youth to become leaders. We speak about youth leadership but pathways towards same are blurry and nonexistent.
18. More youth should be encouraged and groomed into becoming politicians. A youth assembly approach should be adopted for Tobago with the relevant training be given to those youth advocates.
19. Youth training centres or training programmes need to incorporate innovative subjects like social media, communications etc. Additionally there should be train the trainer courses to ensure that programme administrators are up to date as it relates to new and emerging trends and certifications.
20. There is a need for trained youth personnel to service the needs of youth in Trinidad and Tobago. Many of the persons working in youth services are not trained and in most instances there is a shortage of youth practitioners. We need more persons trained to cater to the needs of the youth.
21. Life skills training needs to be adopted. Our academic institutions lean too much to academia and the simplest of skills necessary to allow youth to be able to take care of themselves or transition into adulthood are not taught. Thus investments need to be made to teach youth those skills.
22. Greater use has to be made of culture as it relates to disciplining our youth and teaching them what is right and wrong. Culture plays a big role in teaching of skills and mannerisms and the rich culture that exists in Trinidad and Tobago should be utilized to assist youth in that regard.
23. We need to teach our youth values and help them to build up their self-esteem so that they don't fall prey to society's materialistic pitfalls and traps.
24. Knowledge transfer has to be initiated and planned for as many youth leaders exit the fore and don't pass on intrinsic knowledge to subordinates and compatriots, which causes a vacuum and lost productivity. There should be avenues to transfer knowledge not only amongst youth, but for youth initiatives and programmes as well. This can be achieved

by matching professionals to youth as well as utilizing professional to give career guidance to youth at various levels.

25. The youth leadership institute needs to be pursued as well as implemented to assist youth development initiatives.
26. There should also be some form of business mentorship for youth to encourage entrepreneurship.
27. Parental training has to be prioritized, especially for young mothers. It is taken for granted that as long as you give birth you are a parent however we need to be mindful that some of these children don't know how to be a parent or raise a child.
28. Government can institute big brother and big sister programmes to assist youth and provide much needed guidance to youth.
29. Hosting of career days as well as job counselling for youth is needed as many youth don't have any idea as to what they want to be or how to go about being that future version of themselves. Career days will expose them to the various professions that exist as they grow, job counselling with assist them in making the right career choices.
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Technical and Administrative Assistance

1. There are hardly any systems in place to assist students in rural communities to get to school, specifically those that have to commute to town or other institutions of higher learning. More emphasis should be placed on transportation especially in rural districts to facilitate greater participation at schools and other programmes.
2. Social services are lacking and are failing youth owing to the level of bureaucracy involved.
3. There exists many non-financial solutions to the problems faced by youth. MSYA and even other youth groups can assist each other through shared services, collaboration or the provision of technical and/or other assistance.
4. Youth groups require technical assistance as it relates to marketing, product development, event planning and managing their operations.
5. There should be group management courses for youth practitioners and administrators. It should include funding and financial management so they learn the basics of planning and budgeting as well as public speaking.
6. There should be more done in the area of giving support to youth, provision of community counsellors and other necessary youth services
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Facilities

- 1.
2. Use of community centres and other community facilities for training youth and hosting programmes.
3. Lack of sport and youth facilities within communities.
4. Access to sporting and youth facilities, as well as the ownership and/or management of said facilities is un-specified.
5. There is no maintenance of facilities as well as recreational grounds which cause problems as they are overgrown and cannot be utilized.
6. There is a lack of facilities that cater to persons with special needs as well as programmes designed specifically for and catering to said individuals. There needs to be some kind of integration mechanisms for these persons to access facilities as well as programmes to aid in their development and to cater to their respective needs.
7. There is a need for youth centres and spaces especially in rural communities to provide youth with areas where they can invest in constructive programmes and initiatives, instead of roaming the streets and indulging in mischief.
8. There needs to be some classification and categorization of community needs with regards to facilities. Some communities apparently have too many facilities and programmes, whilst others have none. So some form of needs analysis needs to be conducted and a priority listing developed with regards to treating with the various communities in a systematic order.
9. An assessment needs to be conducted on all facilities to evaluate their status and level of functionality and operability.
10. Homework centers need to be established within districts. Children return home from school whilst their mothers and fathers are still at work and with no formal place to go, they end up wandering the streets and get into wrong company.
11. There is a lack of communal facilities especially in housing developments. These devilment areas are built with no regard for or to sport enthusiasts and there is no area for recreation and/or game play. It should be established that housing developments should have recreation and other communal areas set aside.
12. Government has to create safe areas and spaces for youth in communities. Parks, facilities and other infrastructure needs to be made secure to protect youth from drugs, gang violence and crime.
13. There is a lack of recreational areas for youth especially in rural areas like Gasparillo and Morn Diablo
14. There needs to be an investment in youth development centres in communities, especially those communities where youth are at risk.
15. There needs to be improvements made to local facilities to have effective utilization of same.
16. There are issues in accessing facilities for those persons with disabilities. Many of our facilities don't have disabled access points.

17. Maintenance and security at sporting facilities needs to be revisited. Facilities must be adequately maintained to keep them operational and there has to be some measure of safety for patrons especially in those areas which are deemed high risk
18. Youth centres should have access to social and other media to encourage youth to frequent the centres. This can also be utilized as an engagement tool.
19. Youth activity centres should be implemented across communities as well as various youth specific programmes to assist in the various areas of youth life.
20. Greater facilities and dispersion of same to aid in youth engagement.
21. There is too much bureaucracy as it relates to accessing youth facilities. Easier access should be granted especially to youth groups at the community level to youth and other communal facilities.
22. The cost of accessing facilities sometimes is beyond the capacity of youth groups and organizations. Systems should be put in place to allow for youth groups etc. to access these facilities at minimal or subsidized costs.
23. The MSYA has two camps operational, none of which cater for females. There needs to be the institution of a female YDAC.
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Youth Employment

1. Youth unemployment is a serious issue which has to be addressed, especially for university graduates. Most persons come out of school, with degrees and other qualifications and are unable to find suitable employment sometimes for years.
2. There needs to be an increase in the wages paid to youth. Many youth are at a disadvantage with regards to wages as most times lack of experience is cited, especially youth who emanate from university programmes who may have student loans to pay for.
3. A conscious effort needs to be made to provide jobs for youth. The brain drain problem which we face will be eliminated if we provide jobs for youth, which will in turn make them want to stay in Trinidad and Tobago.
4. There is a disconnect between the operations of CPO and the Public service between Trinidad and Tobago, as such there is inequality with regards to employment and other issues in Tobago which negatively impacts youth in Tobago. As such there needs to be equality of operations as well as the applications of policy guidelines across both countries as it relates to the operations of both factions.
5. The stigma which is attached to persons who are unemployed and those who are self-employed needs to be removed. Government needs to sensitize youth on these matters, more so as self-employment and entrepreneurship are key to financial success as has been proven by the success of those persons in the industry.
6. With regards to employment, the issue of job experience is a discriminatory tool and it is unrealistic in some regards as based on the experience required for most jobs, it immediately disregards youth coming out of universities etc. you need a job to get experience but here you are asking for the experience to give them the job.
7. The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs should in all fairness practice what it preaches. More youth should be employed at the Ministry and the various offices that are under its purview.
8. The issue of short term employment and its effect on youth as it relates to stability in life needs to be addressed. Short term employment results in adverse effects when approaching financial institutions for loans, housing etc.
9. More entrepreneurship opportunities need to be developed and implemented for youth. The current academic curriculum is geared towards preparing youth to work and not necessarily to own their own businesses.

Sport

1. Recognition of marginalized sports is a problem for youth. Emphasis placed on more popular sports
2. We need to bring back sport in the communities as a means of engaging youth. Before there was a prevalence of sport programmes however of late these programmes have disappeared.
3. There needs to be greater engagement and use made of national athletes. Athletes should be utilized as role models and ambassadors for youth in communities and schools to share their stories and inspire other children to want to be like them.
4. There needs to be structured sport programmes introduced at the YDAC's. Currently the emphasis is on vocational programme without any sport input. Given the growth of the sport industry and the sensitization of using physical activity to combat lifestyle diseases, then these programmes should be introduced at these facilities.
5. There needs to be greater emphasis on sports for development, especially as it relates to addressing social issues faced by youth in Trinidad and Tobago.

Miscellaneous

1. There needs to be an elimination of the discrimination which exists as it relates to the availability of opportunities and to whom these opportunities are made available to. There should be a system in place where these opportunities, whether it be employment, educational and/or otherwise are made available to all youth in society and not a particular class, creed or race.
2. There is a lack of trained professionals and specialists to service the needs of the youth in Trinidad and Tobago.
3. There needs to be a review of the procedures and bureaucracy involved in accessing education through schools. There is problems and red tape which discourages some parents and results in deterring youth from obtaining a proper education.
4. The absence of religious programmes in school, the community and the home (religion needs to be a foundational aspect of children's lives)
5. There must be mechanisms in the policy to make it relevant irrespective of which administration is governing the country. Policies should be implemented and not discarded only because a different administration assumes power. There also needs to be proper implementation time lines so that results can be monitored and properly assessed.
6. The policy should also speak to females and addressing inequality as well as make provisions for persons with disabilities
7. There must be national integration and growth of the youth sector. If youth are incorporated into the system, it will allow for greater productivity as well as innovation, however as it stands youth programmes are not integrated and youth development is not prioritized.
8. Cost of living is too high and steps need to be taken to cushion youth against same. Many youths don't have the capacity or the ability to deal with the cost of living based on their incomes and job opportunities. Thus some mechanisms must be adopted to help youth cope with the high cost of living in Trinidad and Tobago.
9. Youth practitioners need to be certified in an effort to protect youth from predators and other negative influences which may seek to infiltrate these services to lead youth astray.
10. Alcohol abuse needs to be tackled at the national level. Many youth are slaves to alcohol and nothing is actively being done to address the issue. Youth rallies can be utilized to address the issue and to bring awareness amongst youth.
11. Societal rules need to be adjusted so that they accommodate youth. Many laws inadvertently discriminate and transgress on the rights of youth. Closer attention needs to be paid to such laws and efforts need to be made to amend them so that they accommodate youth.
12. Discrimination and stigmatization of youth are rampant in Trinidad and Tobago. youth are persecuted for having differing viewpoints as well as displaying their identity, whilst various practices exercised by persons in society actively discriminate against youth. For example a young man or woman leaving university can't find a job because they need experience in addition to their degree, but they need the job to gain the experience.

13. Bullying and violence in schools should be a priority as these atrocities have been growing in popularity of late.
14. A policy should be developed for a system of rewards and incentives for youth who achieve international accolades or who bring recognition to Trinidad and Tobago internationally. This would seek to incentivize youth to aspire to achieve more.
15. Policy continuity should be enforced. It should be made that policies are free standing and exempt from political sway or influence.
16. There needs to be a reinvestment in cultural activities. Cultural capitals should be developed within communities where youth can learn aspects of their various cultures thus building greater cohesiveness and national pride.
17. An independent policy implementation committee needs to be assembled to ensure or oversee policy implementation and to hold MSYA accountable to policy objectives and dictates.
18. There has to be a concerted effort made towards getting more media exposure to youth aspects such as achievements and initiatives. Youth exposure is aligned to youth empowerment so ensuring that youth see the benefit of their efforts will go a long way in encouraging them an incentivizing other youth.
19. MSYA should invest in youth media initiatives aimed at advertising youth exploits, achievements and other initiatives.
20. Youth interest and involvement in policy development ought to be considered and encouraged. Most times youth shy away from said activity, not realizing the importance it holds to crafting their futures.
21. Housing for youth Is an important item that should be addressed. Housing and real estate are so expensive that it is literally impossible as youth to access housing. Government also needs to set regulations for prices of house and land as they are spiraling out of control.
22. There is drastic inequality across sport and youth as more is spent on sport than on youth and youth does not get near enough attention and/or focus as does sport.
23. We need to adapt holistic development of youth, not just parts of it. We need to look at youth at home, in the community, academic, professional as well as the practical aspects of youth development and engage them fully and holistically and not as separate modules to be implemented or developed individually.
24. Re-inclusion mechanisms need to be implemented as a means of getting former youth administrators and advocates to contribute and assist in youth development initiatives. Too often when persons exit their positions there are no mechanisms in place to allow the state or youth to benefit from their skills and experience that they would have acquired serving in their various capacities.
25. The status of the social environment is one of concern as for youth to flourish, the environment must be conducive. Currently the socio-economic environment is not conducive to youth development. If we want our youth to develop, we must create an enabling environment that fosters that development.
26. A national response needs to be adopted in dealing with mental health of youth, and to sensitize the nation on the effects and symptoms of mental health so it can be treated as

the disease that it is and persons not discriminated against or disenfranchised as a result of same.

27. Product creation, entrepreneurship and support should be key aspects on the agenda in the development of the national youth policy, and in the pursuit of youth development.
28. There needs to be emphasis placed on building capacity within the institutions dealing with youth development, additionally, there has to be a focus on managing both youth groups and NGO's to ensure that their operations are aligned to a national framework and structure.
29. Prior to the development of a new national Youth Policy, there has to be a review and evaluation of the previous policy, and stakeholders need to be alerted as to what occurred with the last policy via a comprehensive report on same.
30. The National Youth Council of Trinidad as well as the Tobago and Trinidad Youth Councils need to be re-established in an effort to provide that national framework that youth need.
31. A deliberate effort has to be made to protect our youth and children. Sustainable child protection has to be legislated and implemented to protect children and youth in society.
32. The MSYA needs to update their website to make it more youth friendly as well as to present youth pertinent information
33. The MSYA should update their website so as to collate all youth pertinent information for presentation.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

1. There needs to be investment in world class education and technology. The education system is based on the mundane and there is no investment in new and emerging trends such as innovation or exports. Trinidad and Tobago is blessed with many resources and persons can be trained in business development, exporting and other innovative skills.
2. Vocational classes or courses should include and be updated to include innovation and technology as well as new and emerging fields as well as science. Many vocational programmes are mundane and repetitive, with no real diversity or upgrades with regards to developing trends.
3. Youth innovation is nonexistent in Trinidad and Tobago. The world seems to be leaving Trinidad and Tobago behind as we don't invest in youth innovation.
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YOUTH IN PECULIAR/EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

1. There needs to be special mechanisms implemented for the engagement of youth who are in peculiar or extenuating circumstances; incarcerated or in “hot-spot” communities, children’s homes etc.
2. Parental assistance should be made a priority, especially for young mothers, as most times they are left to fend for themselves.
3. There is a need to engage youth at homes as in most instances we look at the problems that they face in society or at institutions, however there are many youths who face challenging situations at home, so we much have interventions which look at the home environment and the situations that youth face at home.
4. There should be a focus and intervention programmes for those youth who are institutionalized or who are in foster and other homes. In most instances these children have no formal intervention mechanisms and are left to the mercy of the home’s administration. Government must make an effort to intervene and have these children become part of the system of care and sharing nationally.
5. Assistance for persons with disabilities is a problem, especially within the education system. There is literally no help for youth who are dyslectic and in most instances parents have to be the ones to get youth diagnosed as well as find avenues to educate them as the education system does not accommodate them.
6. Diagnosis of learning disabilities is also an issue. Parents are the one to face the cost as children with learning disabilities are classed as either slow or under-performers.
7. Recidivism in the penal system needs to be address. There needs to be active pursuit of rehabilitation of offenders and programmes which seek to facilitate re-integration into society. Too many repeat youth offenders are seen in the nations prison system.
8. Government needs to adopt legislation that treats with incarcerated youth and how they are treated. In many instances, youth who are incarcerated are treated as any other adult criminal and no emphasis is placed on rehabilitation. There needs to be legislation that treats with support programmes and training for youth offenders so that rehabilitation is the goal and not just incarceration.
9. Incarcerated youth need some post incarceration programmes that they should be compelled to undertake. This should be part of a re-integration programme.
10. The policy needs to address youth who are in transition. Those youth who are in homes or juvenile centers and who have to make the transition to the penal system or re-integrated back into society. There must be some allocations made to address this. Specifically as it relates to the launch of the children’s court and with reference to the children’s act of Trinidad and Tobago and how we treat with youth offenders and their families. There exist many working commonwealth models that Trinidad and Tobago can adopt in lieu of same.

11. Cost of living is too high and steps need to be taken to cushion youth against same. Many youths don't have the capacity or the ability to deal with the cost of living based on their incomes and job opportunities. Thus some mechanisms must be adopted to help youth cope with the high cost of living in Trinidad and Tobago.
12. Youth who are at risk or who are faced with difficult circumstances need to be addressed using a trauma engagement approach. In addition to providing this kind of care, there has to be parental engagement for said youth to assist parents in coping and dealing with these youth.
13. There needs to be training for youth administrators or other youth officers and youth professionals to empower them to deal with issues of incest and other issues of a personal nature.
14. Government needs to institute programmes which address at risk youth in Trinidad and Tobago. Many at risk youth are not tabled on policy agendas and are treated as outcasts. Special provisions must be made for those youth to engage them before they become problematic or are engaged by negative parties.
15. Allocations have to be made for kids without parental guidance. Counseling or some form of big brother concept has to be adopted to provide these youth with proper role models.
16. There needs to be policy guidelines for mental health and depression and for treating with these diseases amongst our youth population.
17. The assessment process for accessing social grants has to be revisited to make them more accessible to persons living with disabilities. As they are currently it is very hard for person to access these grants. The process also needs to be simplified.
18. There has to be some form of post school care for persons with disabilities. Some form of programme or initiative has to be developed to cater to the needs of person or youth living with disabilities.
19. The government has to create a platform for abused youth. This should entail not only engagement of those youth but provision of support services to assist them in dealing with the lingering effects of the abuse they suffered.
20. Greater focus needs to be placed on programming for persons with disabilities. Most times we focus on youth in general and not specifically being proactive as it relates to youth living with disabilities.
21. Rehabilitation and care for youth offenders has to be a priority. Most instances we experience repeat offenders because we don't adequately care for and rehabilitate youth, our emphasis is on punishment which does not work. The goal should be to work towards rehabilitation so that we can reintegrate these youth back into society.
22. Use of technical programmes to assist youth who are institutionalized such as the St. Michael's home to assist with reintegration and rehabilitation.
23. Government needs to institute programmes which address at risk youth in Trinidad and Tobago. Many at risk youth are not tabled on policy agendas and are treated as outcasts. Special provisions must be made for those youth to engage them before they become problematic or are engaged by negative parties.
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VOLUNTEERISM

5. There is a shortage of volunteers to assist with youth development. In prior years the existence of many volunteers at the community level aided in giving youth direction, however of late there aren't many persons devoting their time to assisting youth and this has led to them going astray. Persons need to get more involved and give of their time to assist youth and prevent them from falling into disruptive behavior.
6. There is a lack of youth mentors and youth advisors in communities. Before there used to be persons volunteering to work with youth, however of late this is almost none existent. Emphasis must be placed on having mentors for youth to help them deal with issues as well as to give much needed advice.
7. Volunteerism has to be placed on the agenda. There needs to be more volunteers available to engage youth in communities. There is a shortage of professionals to adequately meet the needs of youth thus volunteerism should be utilized to address the shortfall.
8. A national service policy needs to be developed which seeks to institute national service programmes.
9. A system should be adopted for persons who volunteer their services with respect to youth development. It should be monetary in nature to encourage other persons to engage in volunteerism.
10. A strong effort must be made to bring back volunteerism and patriotism. Youth need guidance which is lacking so persons need to volunteer and help youth reconnect with their culture and substance.
11. We need to find ways to incentivize volunteers so that persons will be more willing to give of their time towards youth development initiatives
12. The older population should be encouraged to get involved in youth development, to share their experience and pass on valuable information and skills.

EDUCATION

1. There exists a disconnect between academics and life, and we need to be cognizant of this fact. The education system has to be rewired to incorporate aspects of life skills so youth will also learn the skills needed to become responsible and competent adults.
2. The education system needs to adopt courses in innovation and entrepreneurship at an early age. The school system prepares students to go to work for others, but it does not allude to owning your own business and likewise.
3. Assistance for persons with disabilities is a problem, especially within the education system. There is literally no help for youth who are dyslectic and in most instances parents have to be the ones to get youth diagnosed as well as find avenues to educate them as the education system does not accommodate them.
4. Our education system needs to be revamped or revisited. We need to address problems at an early age at the primary school level before they develop and are compounded. There needs to be guidance counsellors at every primary school so youth have early access to problems affecting them.
5. The practice of drop-off boxes should be adopted for schools to allow students indicate the programmes that they would like to have access to without fear of retribution or persecution.
6. There needs to be equality in programme offerings at schools. Some schools seem to get all the programmes whilst some are left to fend for themselves. If programmes are being offered at the primary and secondary school level, then these programmes should be implemented at all schools not just select schools.
7. Many schools nationally are labelled as problem schools. Instead of ignoring those schools, government should employ school intervention programmes to assist those schools in combating the problems they face with respect to the enrolled youth. Teachers also need assistance with regards to dealing with problematic youths and the adaptation of a humanity approach, utilizing love and care as opposed to punishment.
8. We need to adopt sex education in schools for youth, utilizing realistic information to educate youth instead of treating with this as a delicate issue and feeding the youth unrealistic information in that regard.
9. More scholarship opportunities need to be afforded to youth to assist those who are not financially able to pursue higher level education and other opportunities that seek to aid their development.
10. There has to be a resurgence of physical education at the school levels as well as teachers to teach same.
11. Effort has to be made to reduce the cost of education and developmental courses. Most persons cannot afford same and there are limited scholarships available.

12. The act of suspending pupils for bad behavior needs to be revisited. There should be other methods of punishment which are more wholesome and beneficial to the youth, adopted as a means of curbing their delinquent behavior.
13. The Ministry of Education needs to adopt a NCAA structure for schools to incorporate sport participation at every level.
14. Scholarship opportunities are needed for individuals from rural communities to assist in helping them secure an education. In most instances individuals from rural communities lack the necessary funding to pursue higher education. Assistance from the government can go a long way in helping them achieve their goals.
15. The government needs to facilitate transport access for rural communities. Most times there is difficulty in accessing these communities especially for persons who commute to work in the city. The situation is compounded when youth have to access education as well as attend various courses and programmes outside of the community. Most times they have to abandon their efforts as there is difficulty in returning home after.
16. There needs to be a review of the priority areas of study for Trinidad and Tobago in general as many university graduates are without jobs despite pursuing those areas so study.
17. Review of the use of suspensions and replace them with more productive and fulfilling measures.
- 18.