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Southern Africa Labour and  
Development Research Unit

## Towards a Basic Package of Support for Youth in South Africa. Policy review report and recommendations on an institutional approach

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Lauren Graham, Ariane De Lannoy, Solange Rosa and Jessica Breakey



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### About the paper and acknowledgements:

This working paper is one in a series of reports and working papers by the project “Towards a Basic Package of Support for Young People who are not Employed, in Education or Training (NEET) in South Africa”. The BPS project, which commenced in November 2018 and runs until March 2020, explores the feasibility and design of a South African intervention to provide more comprehensive support to young people, aged 15 – 24 years, who are NEET.

Based on research and consultations, the project has put forward a detailed proposal for a programmatic intervention that can provide well-targeted, individualised and long-term support to young people in South Africa, while building a local community of practice to support both young people and the services and opportunities that exist for them. The proposal carefully sets out the various building blocks of such an intervention, founded in a review of best practices. It concludes with a proposal for a pilot that can be implemented at the local level across different South African municipalities. It also proposes an approach to develop an overarching, national institutional framework that can both ensure sufficient resource allocation and safeguard the quality, integrity and coherence of the intervention when rolled out at scale.

The project builds on earlier work, led by the Poverty & Inequality Initiative and the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU), both at the University of Cape Town, in partnership with a coalition of partners in government, academia and civil society, to conceptualise a more comprehensive approach to support South Africa’s youth.

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## **Abstract**

South Africa is a policy rich environment, with many excellent policies that accurately identify the challenges facing young people as they transition through school and towards work. However, young people still face significant challenges in this transition period. This paper reports on a policy review undertaken as part of the Basic Package of Support for Youth in South Africa project, which involved an assessment of existing policies and several consultations with various departments about how they support NEET youth. The policy assessment focuses on policies that pertain to the multidimensional needs of young people, including education, training, health, wellbeing, and employment. It does so in order to identify key policies and programmes that set out mandates to support young people who are not in employment, education and training. It provides the overarching policy context, identifies which departments have mandates to serve youth and what programmes exist, and reports which departments report a willingness to participate in developing a basic package of support for youth. The key finding is that there are a number of programmes that exist, but that young people continue to fall through the cracks because of a lack of policy coordination and integration. Based on this, the paper proposes an institutional framework to support a basic package of support for youth in South Africa.

Key words: policy, NEET youth, youth transitions, institutional arrangements

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## Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
ANA	Annual National Assessments
AYHP	Adolescent and Youth Health Policy
AYFS	Adolescent and Youth-Friendly Services
BPS	Basic Package of Support
CAMH	Child and Adolescent Mental Health
CDW	Community Development Worker
CHW	Community Health Workers
CWP	Community Works Programme
CSG	Child Support Grant
CYCWs	Child and Youth Care Workers
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DDDD	Data-Driven District Dashboard
DEL	Department of Employment and Labour
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DHEST	Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology
DOH	Department of Health
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DPW	Department of Public Works
DSBD	Department of Small Business Development
DSD	Department of Social Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DWYPD	Department of Youth, Women and People with Disabilities
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ESSA	Employment Services of South Africa
EU	European Union
ETI	Employment Tax Incentive
FCG	Foster Care Grant
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISHP	Integrated School Health Plan
LURITZ	Learner Unit Record Information and Tracking System
MERSETA	Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
NACCW	National Association of Child Care Workers
NAFCI	National Adolescent-Friendly Clinic Initiative
NARYSEC	National Rural Youth Service Corps

NDP	National Development Plan
NECT	National Education Collaboration Trust
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NIDS	National Income Dynamics Study
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NYS	National Youth Service
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYDC	National Youth Development Coordinating Forum
OAG	Old Age Grant
PES	Public Employment Services
PIVOTAL	Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning Programme
PYITT	Youth Intergovernmental Task Teams
PWGY	Presidential Working Group on Youth
PSET	Post School Education and Training
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SACSSP	South African Council of Social Service Professions
SAW	Social Auxiliary Worker
SA-SAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
SDG	Sustainability Development Goal
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEFA	Small Enterprise Finance Agency
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SMMEs	Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises
SOCPEN	Social Pensions system
SW	Social Worker
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YG	Youth Guarantee
YES	Youth Employment Services

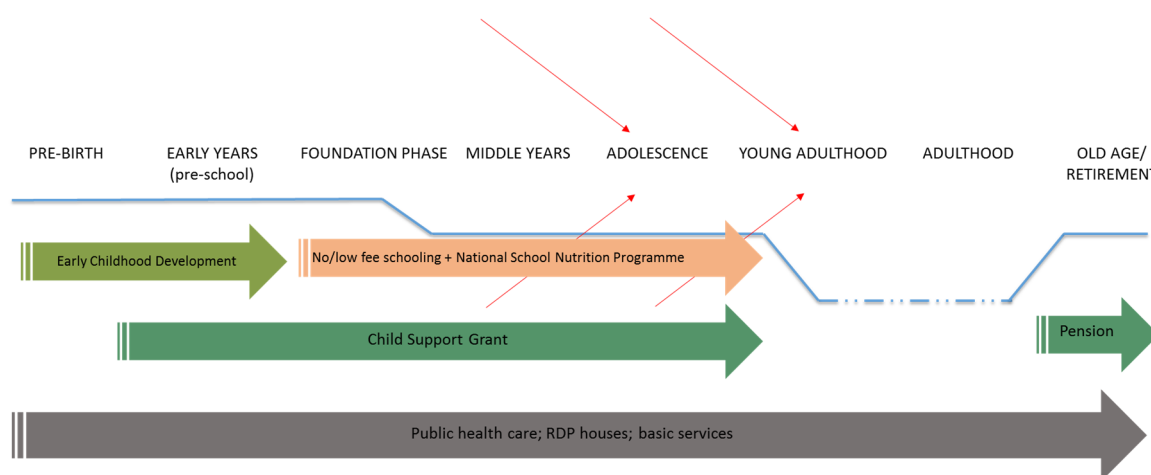
# 1. Introduction

Young people’s lives in South Africa are marked by significant challenges across multiple dimensions of deprivation. These challenges – income poverty, low educational outcomes, poor housing and unreliable or expensive transport options, poor physical and mental health, lack of diverse and productive social networks, etc. – are both structural and individual, and compound one other to make youth particularly vulnerable.<sup>1</sup>

This vulnerability is especially stark during young people’s transitions through adolescence and into adulthood. Many leave school before completing their final matric year; they enter the labour market without the necessary educational credentials and skills, and are often ill-equipped to navigate the complex social structures that determine access to further education and employment. In addition, the actual number of economic and education opportunities available is also severely limited.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, large proportions of these young people lose access to services that were provided as part of the social protection package while they were younger than 18, for instance, the Child Support Grant (CSG), or while still at school (e.g., the National School Nutrition Programme, education and life orientation), as is shown in Figure 1 below. As they age out of the CSG, leave school and do not connect to the labour market, they become “invisible” to the existing administrative systems. At that point in time, they are not in any kind of employment, education or training (NEET) and unable to access support through the country’s social protection system. This group is considered especially vulnerable, at risk of longer-term economic and social exclusion, and in danger of scarring while transitioning into adulthood. Approximately 30% of young people between the ages of 15 to 24 are NEET in South Africa, the equivalent of slightly over three million youth.<sup>i</sup>

**Figure 1: Drop-off in comprehensive social package as youth transition through adolescence and young adulthood<sup>3</sup>**



<sup>i</sup> More African and Coloured youth are NEET than White youth, and the proportion NEET is higher among females than males. Analysis of Community Survey data, QLFS data and of National Income Dynamics Study data shows that the proportion of NEET youth increases as young people grow older. While there is some churn in the “NEET-state” – in other words, not everyone who is NEET at some point in time remains NEET for the rest of their lives – significant proportions do remain NEET until later ages. Remaining NEET for extended periods of time renders young people more vulnerable to poverty and mental health problems (Branson et al. 2018).

Globally and nationally, there are large numbers of young people who are NEET.<sup>4</sup> This is of great political, economic and social concern because a large body of evidence indicates that being NEET, and especially remaining NEET for an extended period of time, has grave consequences for the individual and for society. Being NEET is associated with deteriorating physical and mental health, substance abuse, uncertain job prospects, discouragement in terms of participating in the labour market or education sector, social exclusion, and increased risky behaviour.<sup>5</sup> At a societal level, the adverse economic consequences include lost output, diminished government revenue and increased public spending on social services and the justice and policing system, for example.<sup>6</sup>

Given this situation, there is a clear need to better understand and respond, both at a policy and programmatic level. This policy review and proposed policy approach forms one of a set of reports developed by the Basic Package of Support (BPS) project team to inform what policy and programmatic approach might work best.

### **1.1. Aims and objectives**

The overarching aim of this report was to assess current policies and national level interventions/services to NEETs in order to identify gaps and make recommendations about how a BPS for youth can be institutionally located and supported. The objectives related to this aim are:

- To assess what policies say about what opportunities are currently available to connect with and serve this group;
- To identify the target group, services offered, and delivery mechanisms;
- To establish what gaps currently exist on paper in the policies that determine services to this group;
- To assess the level and extent of the implementation (and therefore gaps in implementation) of such policies;
- To identify what institutional arrangements might be best suited to implementing a BPS – including a possible custodian for the BPS; and
- To determine and outline a proposed new policy framework that could support the BPS.

### **1.2. Scope limitation**

One could argue that all policies that govern the lives of adults pertain to young people over the age of 18 years. However, it is clear that the group we are focusing on is particularly vulnerable and is in a transition phase of their lives with regards to preparing for and engaging in the labour market, becoming more autonomous, and caring for and providing for their households. The policy assessment therefore reviewed policies that pertain to various areas of a young person's transition from childhood towards adulthood, including education, training, employment, health, and social development policies.

For the purposes of this project we use the term “policy” broadly to denote either policies or state-run programmes, even if such programmes do not have a related policy. As the BPS is intended to reach young people nationally and because national priorities inform provincial, district and local policy priorities, the focus was on policies at the national level. It is envisaged that once pilot sites are identified a policy review of provincial, district and local policies may be necessary.

Although the BPS focuses primarily and initially on youth between the ages of 15 and 24, the policy review has a wider age range since most policies follow the formal definition of youth in South Africa as per the National Youth Policy (15 – 34 years). However, policies were assessed with a view to which target groups they denote.

A full policy analysis of all the pertinent policies is beyond the scope of this study. Rather we reviewed specifically identified policies – those that *should* be responding to youth – with a view to a specific set of questions in order to identify mandates and gaps in what existing policies allow for in terms of services. Where information is available it also comments on the implementation and efficacy of such services, but it should be noted that the purpose of the review was not to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of all existing programmes and services that government departments are running for NEET youth. As outlined in the methodology below it relies on publicly available information and interviews with government officials at the national level to provide such insight.

Its focus is on the current, most relevant policies in South Africa, across government departments, and how various policies “speak to” or intend to address the needs of a specific group of young who are NEET. It is not a thorough policy analysis but rather a systematic scan and assessment of relevant policies to understand where there are “leverage points” that can be used to locate the BPS or encourage departments to buy into the BPS. Specifically, we focus on policy mandates as outlined in policy documents and garnered from interviews and consultations, current services and programmes, and “appetite” to participate in a collaboration to provide a BPS for NEET youth. We then present a possible policy approach that could support the implementation of the BPS.

The study focused only on policies that are currently enacted (i.e. it did not include a historical assessment of policies) but did specifically engage with policy proposals where these were likely to inform an aspect of the BPS (e.g. proposals about social protection mechanisms for youth). A previous historical review of policies that pertain to youth employment<sup>7</sup> was consulted to determine if there were any historical policies that sought to offer a similar BPS. This did not reveal any additional policies that needed to be included in the policy scan.

Having discussed the aims and scope limitation of the review, we now discuss the methodology used to identify and assess the policies, and then discuss these in relation to a) the mandates of each department; b) existing programmes and services including commentary on implementation where evidence exists; and c) “appetite” for participation in a BPS. Finally, we present a proposed policy approach to support the BPS.

### **1.3. Methodological approach**

The research for the policy review was done through a process of identifying the national departments that have responsibilities for various aspects of young people’s lives and then identifying current policies that pertain to these responsibilities. Identified policies were then categorised as follows:

- Policies pertaining to state youth institutions
- Policies pertaining to programmes for youth/in which youth are targeted
- Skills training, post-school education policies
- Employment and enterprise development policies
- General policies that provide a guiding framework (e.g. the National Development Plan)

- Education legislation and policies
- Health/mental health
- Social development
- Policy proposals/discussion documents

A full list of the policies reviewed is included in Appendix A. The identified policies were reviewed with a view to answering the following questions:

- Does the policy make (explicit and implicit) provision for young people not in employment, education or training?
- Does the policy support identification and support for young people at risk of becoming NEET?
- What services/programmes are identified?
- Target beneficiaries
- Targets in terms of numbers
- Programme/service description
- Requirements for entry
- Implementing agent/who is responsible for delivery?
- What are the connection points for identifying young people/engaging young people?

Following the policy review we conducted a set of interviews and consultations with relevant departments. We targeted Director-Generals or Deputy Director-Generals of the sections of the departments that, in the policy documents, had a mandate for supporting youth. In many cases, managing directors of programmes and units were also part of consultations. The purpose of the consultations was to:

- Present the problem that NEET youth face;
- Outline the proposed BPS;
- Explain our understanding of the departmental mandate and existing services/programmes;
- Allow departmental representatives to clarify their mandate and current activities to support youth;
- Garner departmental feedback on the proposed BPS; and
- Gauge “appetite” to collaborate on a policy approach to the BPS.

A full list of those who participated in the consultations and interviews is included as Appendix B. The consultations were recorded in writing and written up according to the themes identified for the review i.e. mandate, programmes and services, and appetite to collaborate.

It should be noted that, in the course of 2019, while the policy work was being undertaken, it emerged that there were two initiatives that aligned with this study. One was the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention, which aims to develop five prongs of activities that would address youth unemployment over the next five years. The second is the Education for Employment programme – an initiative of the Government Technical Advisory Centre and the European Union to promote engagement between the Departments of Education; Higher Education, Science and Technology; and Employment and Labour. Several conversations were held with members of these initiatives by members of the Steering Committee of this project and, where pertinent, the findings from these conversations are included in the report.

## 1.4. Report outline

The report first presents a situational analysis of NEET youth in South Africa, making the case for treating the group as heterogeneous, with diverse needs and challenges. We then provide a summary of the proposed BPS, which is outlined in more detail in the overarching project report.

We then provide the findings of the policy review, which is intended to identify what policy mechanisms can support the implementation of a BPS. We begin with the current overarching policy context; then outline policy mandates for addressing the needs of young people. We describe existing state programmes and services, and examples of inter-departmental collaborations. Lastly, we present the results of consultations with a focus on which departments have the “appetite” to participate in piloting a BPS. These findings inform the recommendation for institutional arrangements that could be put in place to support the delivery of a BPS.

## 2. Situational analysis of NEET youth

As is discussed in a separate report on the quantitative analysis of NEET youth<sup>8</sup>, the share of young people between the ages of 15 to 24 who were NEET in South Africa was around 30% in the second quarter of 2019, the equivalent of slightly over three million youth. The NEET rate has been consistently over 28% of the youth population aged 15 to 24 years, for the past six years. Table 1 illustrates the key point made in that paper – that this group is a heterogeneous one. Table 1 outlines several dimensions that provide insight into this heterogeneity.

**Table 1: Overview of NEET youth (15 – 24 yrs) in South Africa, QLFS Q2 data for 2013 and 2019**

Indicator		2013		2019	
		N	%	N	%
Labour market orientation	Unemployed	1 355 525	44.6	1 450 247	<b>47.6</b>
	Discouraged job seeker	706 580	23.2	652 284	<b>21.4</b>
	Inactive	979 072	32.2	946 896	<b>31.0</b>
Gender	Male	1 236 504	44.8	1 438 247	<b>47.2</b>
	Female	1 678 673	55.2	1 611 880	<b>52.9</b>
Race	Black	2 664 671	87.6	2 663 797	<b>87.3</b>
	Coloured	268 842	8.8	280 199	<b>9.2</b>
	Asian/Indian	36 993	1.2	39 4595	<b>1.3</b>
	White	70 671	2.3	66 671 12	<b>2.2</b>
Geographical location	Rural	1 278 123	42.0	1 263 828	<b>41.4</b>
	Urban	1 763 055	58.0	1 786 298	<b>58.6</b>
Age category	15 – 19	582 057	19.1	537 413	<b>17.6</b>
	20 – 24	2 459 120	80.9	2 512 714	<b>82.4</b>
Education <sup>ii</sup>	Less than matric	18 23 883	60.2	1 659 698	<b>54.8</b>
	Matric	10 85 233	35.8	1 205 985	<b>39.8</b>
	More than matric	1 18 717	3.9	161 197	<b>5.3</b>

<sup>ii</sup> “*Matric*” is equivalent to final high school year, which is 12 years of education. Thus, youth with “*Less than matric*” have less than 12 years of education, while those with “*More than matric*” have at least 13 years of education and have one of the following qualifications: Certificate with grade 12/STD 10, diploma with grade 12/STD 10, N5/NTC 5, N6/NTC 6, Higher Diploma; Post Higher Diploma (Masters; Doctoral Diploma), Bachelor’s degree; Bachelor’s degree and Post Graduate Diploma, Honours Degree and Higher Degree (Masters/PhD).

The 2019 data show that the majority of NEET youth are in fact orientated towards the labour market – that is, they want to work, even if they have not actively searched for work in the survey reference period. Although the gender gap is closing, the majority of young NEET youth are female (53%). Caregiving plays a key role in explaining the higher proportion of young NEET women who are inactive. In other words, a large proportion of inactive, female youth is contributing to their households’ functioning by looking after children and/or others in need of care.<sup>9</sup>

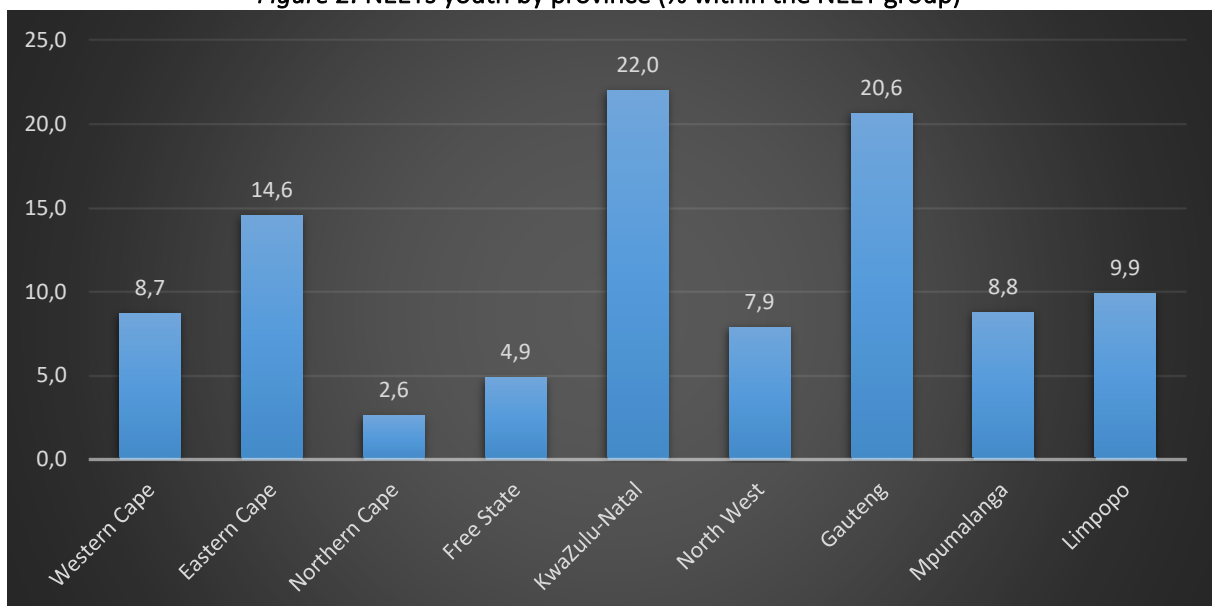
Table 1 further indicates that the overwhelming majority of NEET youth in South Africa are Black (87%). In addition, young NEET youth are mostly concentrated in urban areas (59%), and most young people who NEET are found in the older age categories of 20 – 24 (total number of NEETs in that age bracket is 2 512 714).

Finally, more than half of NEET youth aged 15 – 24 have completed less than the final year of secondary school. This group makes up over 54% of young people who are NEET (or the equivalent of 1 659 698); it is a sub-group of youth that is not often targeted by interventions that aim to improve employability<sup>10</sup>, but that is arguably one of the most vulnerable in society<sup>11</sup>.

These characteristics have important implications for the design, implementation and cost of an intervention that could support these youth and reconnect them to either education, training or employment. NEET youth who have completed less than the final year of secondary education may wish to re-gain access to the schooling system; some may have made it into the matric year, but did not manage to pass their final high school exams; they may thus want to re-write their matric exams. Youth who have some tertiary education but who struggle to find work may need to gain access to an intermediary programme that connects them to the labour market, while others may want to enrol for an additional year of study.

Figure 1 shows that, in absolute terms, NEET youth in the country are mostly concentrated in KwaZulu-Natal (22%), Gauteng (21%), and the Eastern Cape (15%). The provincial profiles indicate significant differences in the NEET composition (e.g. education, race and gender profiles) across the provinces and illustrate the need to understand the nuances within the young NEET group at the sub-national level to allow for an efficient intervention design.

**Figure 2: NEETs youth by province (% within the NEET group)**



In this context, there is a need for a tailored, multi-faceted approach to support NEET youth in order to address these young people's challenges better. We turn now to what such an approach might look like at the programmatic level.

### **3. Responding to the challenge: a summary of the BPS for youth**

Given the complexities that young people face in navigating their transition out of school and towards the futures they anticipate for themselves, as well as the multiple deprivations that they face along the way, a BPS should be aimed at promoting enhanced life outcomes by proactively reaching out and offering NEET youth well-targeted, multi-faceted transition support that responds to their individual needs. Within this over-arching aim, the emphasis is on offering multi-faceted and tailored support that meets the needs of a young person, with a face-to-face component that gives advice, adds credentials and resources, provides a sense of possibility and belonging, and strengthens a young person's agency, no longer leaving that young person to figure out pathways to (re)connection on their own. The full description of what the BPS might look and how it will be implemented is contained in the project's summary report<sup>12</sup>. The key objectives of the BPS are to:

1. Provide young people with a sense of possibility, by clarifying available pathways into education, training and work;
2. Support young people's agency and well-being, through connections to a range of practical support services – for instance, social security and mental health support – to strengthen their ability to take up and complete such pathways;
3. Connect young people to employment, education and training opportunities;
4. Support young people's ability and willingness to remain connected over time and re-engage them when necessary.

The BPS proposes to facilitate access to such services and opportunities and increase their functionality to NEET youth by directly reaching out to young people at the community level, and connecting to and working with a range of public and private/non-profit service providers. Regular evaluation of the BPS and feedback from the youth users will lead to better articulation between the different public and private systems, higher levels of accountability for delivery of services, and ultimately, stronger, more integrated support for young people in the country.

#### **3.1. Target and Scope**

While South Africa defines youth as the broad group of those between the ages of 15 and 35, analysis of the characteristics of NEET youth indicates that the younger age group differs from the older ones and are therefore likely to need a somewhat different approach to support. As a result, this framework focuses on the development and provision of a package of support that, in first instance, targets 15 to 24-year-old NEET youth. The BPS limits its target to the younger NEET cohort because the older group may be much more difficult to reach out to as they have been "disconnected" for longer. It is thus envisaged as an early intervention. Further, the younger group has different characteristics than the older cohort. Trying to offer support for everyone at once will lead to fragmentation of resources and services. At a later stage, and after careful evaluation, this target can be reconsidered, and lessons

learned from providing support for the younger cohort may inform additional programs to support older youth. The BPS also limits its scope to youth who are already NEET. This is not to deny the importance of prevention of young people “falling out of the systems” but instead recognises the large numbers of youth in South Africa who are already NEET and currently under-served. While the BPS can create connections to prevention services already in place, providing such prevention itself is outside of the scope of the programme.

Given the heterogeneity of this group, described above, different subgroups of youth will require different types of interventions and support to help them successfully navigate their transitions through the education and training environment, into a shifting labour market or into a new stage of their lives, such as parenthood. In this context, there is a need for a tailored, multi-faceted approach to support NEET youth that is locally accessible and appropriate to the context in order to better address these young people’s challenges.

### **3.2. Measurable Outcomes**

The hypothesis underlying the intervention design is that a pro-active, comprehensive and well-targeted approach to support young NEETs will ultimately improve their well-being, educational outcomes and employment outcomes. As a result, an efficiently implemented BPS should lead to:

- NEET youth in the programme feel engaged and supported – improvements in well-being, self-care and confidence in future could be measured, for example by Cantrils ladder.
- NEET youth have access to services that help them overcome barriers to employability – improvements in standard health, education, financial and well-being outcomes.
- NEET youth find sustainable training/education and employment opportunities (% beneficiaries placed in employment and education/training opportunities measured at regular intervals throughout the programme – suggested frequency of every three months – average duration of placements, and % of time spent unoccupied).

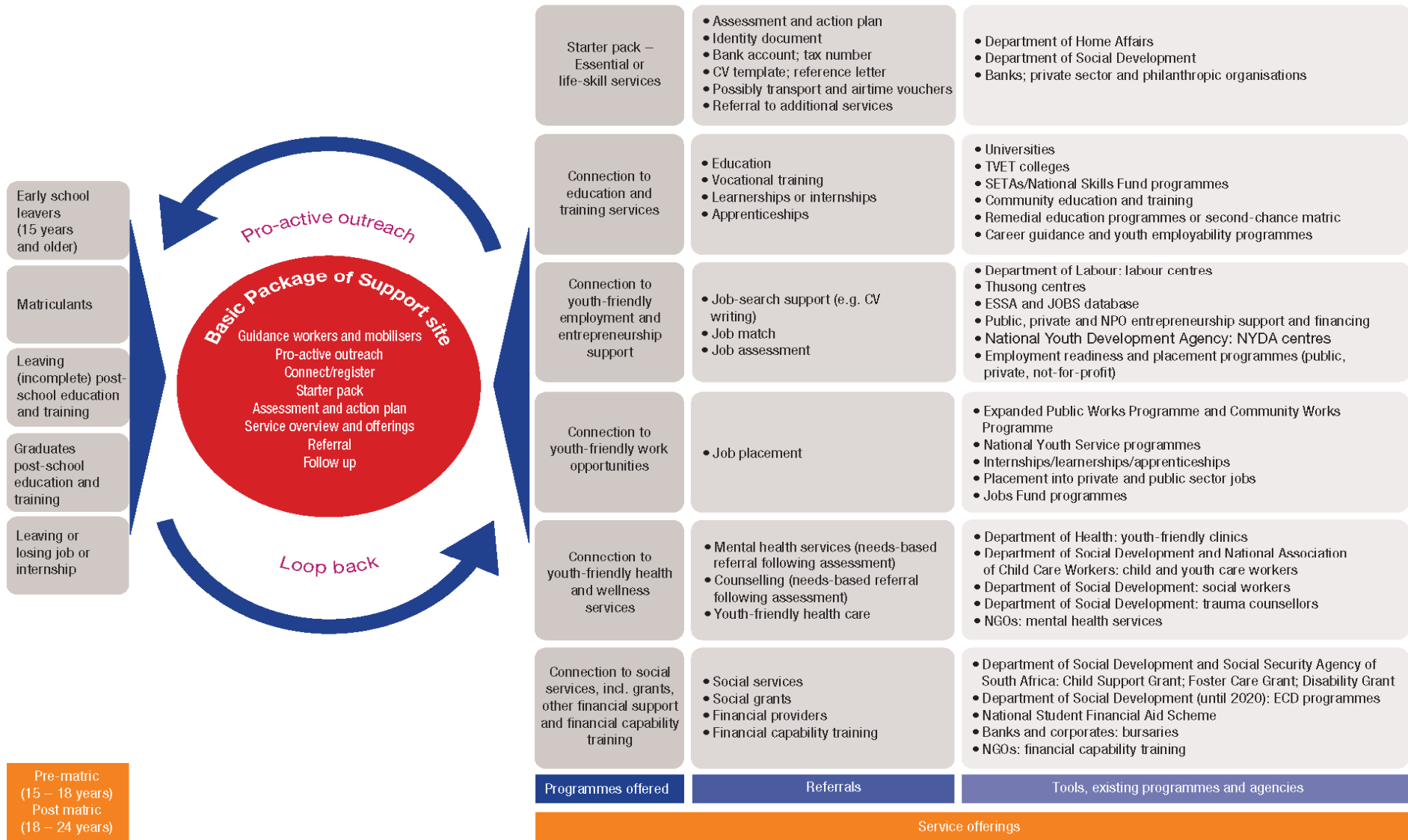
However, it is important to keep in mind that a long-term evaluation design is necessary as the intervention is unlikely to have large, immediate effects on educational outcomes or employment rates, both of which have deep structural roots. A BPS would contribute to President Ramaphosa’s targets, namely to connect young people to two million jobs in the next decade. It also seeks to substantially reduce the number and percentage of NEET youth in the age range 15 – 24 by 2030.

### **3.3. Pillars of a Basic Package of Support for Youth**

This section outlines the key elements of a Basic Package of Support (BPS) for young people in South Africa. In order to achieve the overall aim of the BPS, which is to enhance life outcomes for NEET young people, the BPS seeks to facilitate the provision of integrated, multi-faceted and tailored services, opportunities and support contained within the following pillars:

1. Youth activation sites and guidance counsellors
2. Education, training and skills-related services
3. Youth-friendly employment services (job search and job placement)
4. Specialist psychosocial support and youth-friendly health and wellness services
5. Financial and social assistance

The BPS relies on locally relevant partnerships amongst organisations that are committed to the overarching aim of the programme, and which can enable youth to access services and opportunities in their local context that are appropriate to their self-envisaged and planned pathway. It also relies on the involvement of young people – both as users and youth mobilisers – to evaluate and feed information back on the relevance and user-friendliness of services and opportunities they are referred to. The diagram on the next page provides a depiction of what the programme might look like. The full description of the model and each pillar is contained in the overarching report.



## 4. Overarching policy context

The proposed BPS aligns well with both the international and national policy context that South Africa subscribes to. We begin by outlining the international policy context and then the broad national policy context before outlining specific policy mandates in section 5.

### 4.1. The Sustainable Development Goals

Young people need to be provided with the necessary skills and opportunities required to reach their potential. Countries need to be encouraged and empowered to participate in translating the SDG 2030 Agenda into local, national and regional policy. The non-government sector can also play a significant role in the implementation, monitoring and review of the SDGs as well as in holding governments accountable, which requires political commitment and adequate resources. The following goals are most relevant for a BPS in South Africa:

- Goal 1: No poverty
  - Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
  - Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
  - By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.
  - By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.
- Goal 4: Quality education
  - By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete *free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education* leading to relevant and Goal 4 effective learning outcomes.
  - By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to *affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university*.
  - By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including *technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship*.
  - By 2030, ensure that *all youth* and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, *achieve literacy and numeracy*.
- Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth
  - By 2030, achieve *full and productive employment and decent work* for all women and men, including *for young people* and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
  - By 2020, substantially *reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training*.

- By 2020, develop and operationalise a *global strategy for youth employment* and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.

## **4.2. Rights-based framework**

Children's rights are protected in section 28 of the Constitution. Section 28(1)(a) states that every child has a right to a name and nationality from birth. Section 28(1)(c) covers children's socio-economic rights, including the right to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health-care services and social services. Section 29 encompasses the right to (a) a basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible. Children are defined in the Constitution in Section 28(3) as "as person under the age of 18 years".

For youth aged over the age of 18 years, the relevant socio-economic rights are found in Section 26 ("Right to housing") and Section 27 ("Right to health care, food, water and social security").

Section 22 of the Constitution states, "Every citizen has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. The practice of a trade, occupation or profession may be regulated by law". Section 22 seeks to protect the economic activities of South Africans and implies the right to access to work.

South Africa has also ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>iii</sup> It is thus bound by the provisions in those international conventions. It is also bound by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the African Youth Charter.<sup>iv</sup>

## **4.3. Key overarching policies and policy statements**

A key theme that emerges across the various policies reviewed is the acknowledgement that young people are a vulnerable group and that key strategies to support their transition to adulthood are necessary. Across a range of policies and programmes youth (broadly defined) are identified as a target group for services. The proposed BPS therefore sits well within the current policy environment.

The National Development Plan (NDP) includes a section on "Building a future for South Africa's youth". It does not explicitly refer to young people who are NEET but does include a strong focus on the education and skills training system and on the labour market. As such, it includes an emphasis on the need to improve the schooling and post-schooling system in terms of quality, access, graduation rates and, at the post-school level, the provision of "full funding assistance to students from poor families".

The NDP further mentions the need to "expand learnerships and make training vouchers directly available to job seekers", to work on a "graduate recruitment scheme for the public service" and to focus on training artisans and technical professionals.

The plan further mentions a rather isolated suggestion to "mobilise youth for inner city safety to secure safe places and spaces for young people". It also posits that young pregnant women and young children need to have access to a nutrition programme and to early childhood development support.

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<sup>iii</sup> The South African government initially signed the ICESCR in 1994. It took 20 years for the government to ratify the covenant and it finally entered into force on 12 April 2015.

<sup>iv</sup> Ratified by South Africa 28/05/2009.

The New Growth Path, which although developed in 2010 remains the government's economic policy framework, aims to tackle unemployment in the country in a comprehensive, cross-governmental way and by engaging all stakeholders in society. It does not mention NEET youth specifically but recognises the challenges youth face in relation to the high levels of unemployment in the country. The document identifies a number of "job drivers" as follows:

- Substantial public investment in infrastructure both to create employment directly, in construction, operation and maintenance as well as the production of inputs, and indirectly by improving efficiency across the economy.
- Targeting more labour-absorbing activities across the main economic sectors – the agricultural and mining value chains, manufacturing and services.
- Taking advantage of new opportunities in the knowledge and green economies.
- Leveraging social capital in the social economy and the public services.
- Fostering rural development and regional integration.

It recognises that in each of these areas, a special effort needs to be made to generate opportunities for young people and that government aims to implement a multi-pronged approach to deal with the challenge of youth unemployment.

The Youth Employment Accord, signed in April 2013, is a document that aims to align the priorities of a wide range of stakeholders (signatories to the accord) to what needs to be done to promote youth employment. It defines youth broadly and inclusively but therefore makes no provision for particular groups of vulnerable youth at all. It mentions young school leavers but does not define what this means. It differentiates between early school leavers and those who completed matric, but does not specifically identify groups that are not in employment, education and training. The Accord makes the following proposals that are intended to address youth unemployment, but does not indicate how these should be delivered or what needs to happen to facilitate linkages. Most of the proposals refer to services that already exist rather than making new programme suggestions. The proposals outlined include:

1. Education and skills training:
  - a. Second-chance matric
  - b. Expanding intake of further education and training (FET)<sup>v</sup> colleges
  - c. Developing stronger role for sector education and training authorities (SETAs)
2. Work exposure:
  - a. Job-placement schemes;
  - b. Work-readiness programmes (vacation programmes, job shadowing);
  - c. Internships;
  - d. Work-sharing arrangements to create part-time opportunities.
3. Public sector programmes:
  - a. Youth brigade – expanding on National Youth Service (NYS) programme and National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC);
  - b. Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and Community Works Programme (CWP) to engage more youth (80% of intake should be youth).

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<sup>v</sup> The Accord makes reference to FET colleges, now known as technical and vocational education training (TVET) colleges.

4. Youth target set-asides in new industries (such as green economy). The accord argues that new programmes in particular industries (such as solar heater installations) should employ ONLY youth. In addition, they argue that 60% of new jobs in new economies be set aside for youth.
5. Youth entrepreneurship and youth cooperatives:
  - a. Develop and strengthen dedicated support for such enterprises.
6. Private sector measures – private sector targeted to expand intake of youth plus provide support to youth in first-time jobs.

The Accord is a document that provides a wide range of recommendations, many of which are not practically achievable. For instance, the claim to reserve all jobs in particular programmes within new sectors ONLY for youth is unrealistic given that many such jobs are likely to require specialised skills and managerial experience. However, it does outline clearly what the existing service provisions for unemployed youth are; guides on the implementation of many programmes including the targets set for the EPWP and the CWP; and recognises the need for “a central coordinating mechanism to bring together the various government youth programmes”.

This emphasis is also articulated in President Ramaphosa’s State of the National Address (SONA) in 2019<sup>13</sup>: forging a positive way forward for the country, while placing youth at its core. He stated:

*The fact that the unemployment rate among young South Africans is more than 50% is essentially a national crisis that demands urgent, innovative and coordinated solutions where all of us should see it as a requirement to work together. And because more young people are entering the labour force every year, the economy needs to create far more jobs for youth than it currently does; merely to keep the youth unemployment rate steady. The brutal reality is that when it comes to youth unemployment, we have to run just to remain in the same place.*

*It is therefore essential that we proceed without delay to implement a comprehensive plan – driven and coordinated from The Presidency – to create no fewer than two million new jobs for young people within the next decade. This plan will work across government departments and all three tiers of government, in partnership with the private sector.*

*We are already working with the private sector to create pathways into work for young people through scaling up existing pathway management networks. These are networks that allow young people who opt in increased visibility, network support and opportunities to signal their availability for jobs and self-employment. They make sure that youth from poorer households – and young women in particular – are empowered to take up the new opportunities.*

*Government will continue to provide employment through the Expanded Public Works Programme, especially in labour intensive areas like maintenance, clearing vegetation, plugging water leaks and constructing roads.*

*We will continue to develop programmes to ensure that economically excluded young people are work ready and absorbed into sectors where ‘jobs demand’ is growing. These sectors include global business processing services, agricultural value chains, technical installation, repair and maintenance and new opportunities provided through the digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.*

*Government will also ensure that young people are employed in social economy jobs such as early childhood development and health care. We will expand the National Youth Service to take on 50,000 young people a year.*

*Government will support tech-enabled platforms for self-employed youth in rural areas and townships. We will expand our programmes to enable young people to gain paid workplace experience through initiatives like the Youth Employment Service, and also facilitating work-based internships. We are going to roll out small business incubation centres to provide youth-driven start-ups with financial and technical advice as they begin their journeys.*

*Yesterday, I had the great privilege to meet and engage in dialogue with several young South Africans who are doing simply amazing work to build our country and develop our people. They are entrepreneurs and community builders, activists and artists. If there is one thing we have learned from our engagements with this country's youth is that we cannot impose our solutions on them: everything we have to do must be led by young people themselves. They have told us what they want, and what they need. They want to be employed, yes, but they also want to become employers.*

*They are brimming with ideas, they are at the forefront of innovation, and they want to do things for themselves. We have to support the fire of entrepreneurship because the fortunes of this country depend on the energies and creative talent of our young people.*

The broad concept of a BPS for youth – combining measures to provide youth with the tools needed to create pathways out of deprivation – fits within the broad, short and longer-term aims of the NDP and the electoral mandate outlined by President Ramaphosa for the medium term.

Numerous policies related to youth, including the National Youth Policy (NYP 2015 – 2020, currently being reviewed), the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS III), the Youth and Adolescent Health Policy (2017), the Employment Tax Incentive, amongst others, already propose several strategies to improve the situation for young people in South Africa<sup>14</sup>. The NYP's aim is "to create an environment that enables the young people of South Africa to reach their potential". It covers various aspects of young people's lives – including economic inclusion and participation; education, skills and training; health and well-being; and nation-building and social cohesion – identifies which departments should take charge of the different components of its recommendations; and recognises the need to work in a transversal way to efficiently provide this support to young people.

In addition, there is a very clear focus on addressing the needs of young people across a range of departments. However, very few policies identify NEET youth specifically. Nevertheless, in the policies there is also strong alignment in the identification of state services for youth including public employment, youth service opportunities, learnerships and internships, small business and entrepreneurship development programmes and funding, second-chance matric, and career guidance. These are identified as the "suite" of offerings to address youth unemployment for youth already out of the schooling system. Furthermore, many of the policies refer to the need for better linkages between these offerings, and relatedly, the need for collaboration between a range of stakeholders – both within government and between government, the private sector and civil society. While this is acknowledged, none of the policies provide guidance on *how* this can be achieved. Coordination from the Presidency is intended to address this multi-sectoral challenge.

Mandates to support youth clearly exist across a range of departments and spheres of government. The “ingredients” for a BPS therefore all exist, and the critical challenge is to integrate these services, and to ensure they target the heterogeneous NEET groupings, provide linkages between them, and support young people’s agency to navigate a pathway through them. Therefore, a cross-departmental initiative will be required. This framework proposes a set of policy choices towards a BPS for young people to address the multi-dimensional needs of South Africa’s youth, and implementation as the responsibility of various departments, coordinated by the Presidency. These elements are outlined below. The proposed BPS therefore aligns well with the overarching policy background and interest in supporting young people. We move now to consider which departments have a mandate to participate in delivering such a package.

## **5. Which departments have the mandate for supporting youth?**

As the needs of young people, like those of all people at different phases of life, cut across various domains, the mandate to serve youth sits across several departments. Those that have the most direct mandates include the Department of Employment and Labour; the Department of Basic Education (for younger youth); the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology; the Department of Health; and the Department of Social Development. However, other departments such as the Department of Economic Development, Department of Arts and Culture and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure may also have roles to play.

### **5.1. Departments with a mandate to deliver integrated support to youth**

Although a range of departments hold responsibility for youth, the departments/ministries with the mandate to address the needs of young people in a cross-cutting, integrated way are the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the Department for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (MWYPD) in the Presidency, and the Department of Social Development (DSD). Specifically, the NYDA is mandated as an implementing agency, while the MWYPD has a mandate to set policy. The NYDA’s mandate, as outlined in the NYDA Act of 2008 is to:

- Provide career guidance services;
- Provide access to information regarding products and services of the National Youth Fund;
- Create and administer databases of employment opportunities;
- Provide financial assistance to youths to enable them to further their careers;
- Provide financial assistance to Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and cooperatives (co-ops) owned by youth;
- Provide mentoring services aimed at empowering youth in the economy;
- Provide bridging programmes for youth to facilitate the transition from school or training to the work environment;
- Provide training regarding the concepts and principles of entrepreneurship and business to youth;
- Provide training relating to the personal development of youth;
- Provide training and guidance relating to the establishing and managing of businesses for youth;

- Provide training for unemployed youth to enhance their life and professional skills which would enable them to be integrated into the economy;
- Provide opportunities for training that will promote service to communities and the nation at large; and
- Provide such other services as may be necessary to achieve the aim contemplated in subsection.

The above mandate clearly aligns with what the BPS intends to do in terms of providing guided support for youth and connecting them to available opportunities. However, it should be noted that their mandate is bound by a clause stating that they need to provide these services “within its available resources”, taken from the Constitution, and that the NYDA has historically struggled to deliver on this mandate for a range of reasons both internal and external to the institution itself. Nevertheless, an interview with Ms. Tessa Dooms, the National Planning Commissioner for Youth, suggests that the NYDA could view the BPS as a vehicle by which it can rebrand itself and deliver on its mandate. This is a possibility to consider going forward.

The NYDA reports to the DWYPD. This Department in the Presidency is responsible for oversight, monitoring and evaluation, and policy influence so as “to accelerate socio-economic transformation and implementation of the empowerment and participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities”<sup>15</sup>. It is therefore a critical department to engage with if the BPS is a programme that sits across several departments, and to ensure that the lessons from the analysis done to develop the BPS feed into policy development and thinking.

The DWYPD is also responsible for the development of the National Youth Policy and its implementation strategy. The current National Youth Policy 2015 – 2020<sup>vi</sup> is meant to provide an overarching policy framework for youth-related work across various government departments. Its emphasis is on identifying “mechanisms and interventions” that can help redress “the wrongs of the past and address the specific challenges and immediate needs of the country’s youth” (p. 2).

The policy mentions the fact that large numbers of young people are not in employment, education and training; it also emphasises the need to understand heterogeneity within the youth group (broadly) and to define a differentiated approach to support the various subgroups of youth. In its values and principles section, it calls for a holistic and integrated government approach that would be responsive to the needs of this diverse youth cohort. A BPS proposal would therefore speak to this mandate. However, the policy does not provide specific and diversified recommendations for NEET youth and is not clear in the way in which its proposed policy interventions would be designed and implemented in an integrated government approach.

The policy does include a number of points that are relevant to the design and implementation of a BPS. First, it places an emphasis on the need for economic participation of youth, and for transformation of the economy that would lead to increased youth absorption in the labour market, and increased work exposure. Secondly, the policy suggests a firm focus on education, skills and second-chance education and highlights the high levels of drop out at various stages of the education trajectory. It includes policy recommendations on:

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<sup>vi</sup> A new National Youth Policy is currently being developed.

- The possibility of a matric rewrite (which is only accessible to those who have written their matric exam);
- Career guidance;
- Stronger articulation between school, technical and vocational education training (TVET), adult education and training centres (now transformed into community colleges);
- Expansion of the TVET sector;
- Further development of Community Colleges for those who have not been able to complete their secondary education, and a link to the EPWP and CWP programmes.

In addition, there is a focus on health care and addressing substance abuse, nation-building and social cohesion and on the need to work towards *effective and responsive youth development institutions*.

Many of the proposed actions in the BPS are likely to speak to these calls in the NYP. In fact, **the BPS provides an intervention or mechanism by which to assist young people to access the services that are outlined in the BPS, the mandate of the NYDA, and the Youth Employment Accord amongst other policies.**

These two institutions (the NYDA and the MWYPD) have the clearest mandate for an integrated and cross-cutting initiative such as the BPS.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) also has a mandate to integrate services to promote social and economic well-being, although not only for youth. This mandate sits within the White Paper for Social Development (1997) and its draft updated version – the Draft Revised White Paper for Social Development (2019). The first White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) was rooted in a developmental social welfare approach, which advocates for a welfare system that promotes human capacity and capability within a caring socio-economic environment. Crucial to the approach is that addressing *both* the social and economic needs of individuals is critical in promoting individual capacity and development. The latest version of the White Paper (2019, p. 18) extends this focus to the social development approach, defined as an approach that is:

*concerned with processes of change that lead to improvements in human well-being, social relations and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable, and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice. The definition emphasises social relations, institutional arrangements and political processes that are central to efforts to achieve desirable development outcomes. It includes material achievements, such as good health and education, and access to the goods and services necessary for decent living; and social, cultural and political achievements, such as a sense of security, dignity, the ability to be part of a community through social and cultural recognition, and political representation.*

A theme that is drawn through from the White Paper of 1997 into the current draft, and which has shaped the thinking of DSD is that the approach envisages integration of services (welfare, social protection, economic promotion services) as the best means for promoting human development. DSD has struggled to implement the developmental welfare or social development approach, due to a longstanding focus, in training of social workers, on therapeutic and traditional welfare approaches. However, they continue to envisage their role as one of working with vulnerable groups in integrated ways through an existing professionally trained corps of human service professionals who can rapidly be deployed (2019, p. 20). This is captured in the Framework for Social Welfare Services which envisages a social welfare system that is comprehensive, integrated, rights-based, well-resourced, and

provides quality social welfare services. The BPS therefore fits well with the vision of the Draft White Paper and the Framework for Social Welfare Services.

Currently the DSD delivers on this mandate in three primary ways:

- The delivery of cash grants to eligible people to ensure economic support;
- Overseeing the training and registration of a cohort of social service professionals, who should provide psychosocial support and training to vulnerable groups; and
- Connecting vulnerable groups to existing services delivered either by the DSD or the non-profit organisations (NPOs), which the DSD also has responsibility to oversee and (to some extent) to fund.

Therefore a core part of the DSD mandate includes delivering cash grants to eligible youth, overseeing the work of child and youth care workers (CYCWs) as well as social auxiliary workers (SAWs) and social workers (SWs) (many of whom will be delivering services to youth), and overseeing and funding the work of not-for-profit entities, many of which deliver youth development interventions. More recently, the DSD has been considering ways in which cash grant beneficiaries can be linked to other services in a more integrated and sustained way in order to improve their outcomes.

The DSD oversees the delivery of the following cash grants to the eligible youth population:

- The Child Support Grant (CSG) for youth up to the age of 18 years if their caregivers meet the means test;
- The CSG if a youth is the primary caregiver of a child and they meet the means test;
- The Foster Child Grant (FCG) if they are legally placed in foster care up to the age of 21 years;
- The Care Dependency Grant (up to 18 years) if they have a disability and their caregiver meets the means test;
- The Disability Grant (18 years and older) if they have a disability and if they meet the means test; and
- Social Relief of Distress temporarily in situations where a breadwinner has passed away, they are awaiting the processing of a grant, they are unfit for work for a period of less than six months, or if they are affected by a disaster in an officially declared disaster area.

DSD sets the policy and guidelines, including the means test and other eligibility criteria, and oversees that the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) delivers the grants as required. As part of the policy mandate that DSD holds, they have also been considering whether and how to increase age limits of various grants to ensure that young people have access to some form of financial support in the transition phase.<sup>16</sup> Several policy proposals were discussed (see section 6 for more details) but none have been implemented to date.

Consultations with DSD also revealed several initiatives that are aimed at connecting CSG and FCG beneficiaries with other services (such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme – NSFAS) to improve outcomes for beneficiaries. Their mandate is therefore primarily focused on beneficiaries of the grants. Many of the NEET youth that the BPS seeks to reach would be or would have been grant beneficiaries, but this mandate does exclude those who are not or are no longer beneficiaries. They do therefore see their mandate as supporting youth (grant beneficiaries in particular) and playing a role in connecting young people to other services. This is not clearly outlined in publicly available documentation or policies at this stage, though, but the DSD could play a crucial role given that they do

oversee the SOCPEN dataset of beneficiaries, which could be a tool to engage with potential beneficiaries of the BPS programme. Their mandate of connecting youth to available services also extends to their involvement in the Integrated School Health Policy (ISHP – see section 7 for more detail) – where they are responsible for assisting learners to access services pertaining to psychosocial difficulties that might prevent learners from succeeding, particularly where financial barriers to accessing services are present.

Social service professionals are central to the delivery of integrated services for DSD. It is therefore necessary to consider the nature of the professionally trained corps of human service professionals. For this we assessed the Regulations pertaining to Child and Youth Care Workers, 2014; Scope of Practice for Child and Youth Care Work; and Amended Scope of Practice for Social Work, 2018.

The above regulations provides for five kinds of social service professionals, all of which are allowed to operate only if they are registered as a social service professional with the South African Council of Social Service Professions (SACSSP), which ensures that they meet minimum standards of training and continue professional development.

- Social workers: Professionally trained, having completed a four-year degree in Social Work, which will include practical training. Social workers are responsible for assessing the risks associated with individuals, families, groups and communities. They respond to both social functioning and psychosocial issues and employ methods, which include casework, group work and community work. The scope of practice for social work includes providing counseling, psycho-educational, supportive, treatment, evaluation development, therapeutic and referral services to individuals and families. Social workers are trained to provide crisis intervention, support (includes trauma counseling) and protection to those “at risk”. The scope of practice includes advocacy work in relation to social inequalities, social justice and human rights to challenge all forms of discriminatory and oppressive social structures.
- Social auxiliary workers (SAWs): NQF level 5 trained practitioners that can deliver some social work services, particularly community development services. A SAW works in preventative, education and developmental programmes, including but not limited to life-skills education, economic empowerment, managing stress and conflict and preparation for the different stages of life. SAWs are required to be supervised by a SW (ration of 10 SAWs to 1 SW).
- Community development workers (CDWs): A cohort of workers based in communities that are equipped to direct community members to relevant government services. The programme, launched in 2003, was an initiative intended to “bring government to the people.” CDWs are supposed to be formally trained and officially appointed. In 2012 there were approximately 4 000 CDWs country wide, the idea being that there would be one CDW in every ward.<sup>17</sup>
- Child and youth care workers (CYCWs): Specifically qualified to focus on children and youth within the context of the family, the community, and the lifespan of a person. CYCWs can be employed by the state or by non-government organisations to perform the following functions:
  - Care and development of children and youth where their physical; emotional; spiritual; cognitive; social survival; and developmental, needs are protected;
  - Behaviour management of an individual child or of groups of children;
  - Design and implementation of programmes for children and youth on the basis of their identified developmental needs;
  - Developmental assessment of children and youth within their life-space;

- Development and maintenance of planned environments in child and youth care work;
- Implementation of life-space work;
- Undertaking of child and youth care work administration;
- Developmental play;
- Advocacy for the rights of children;
- Policy development in the field of child and youth care;
- Consulting, supervision management and directing of child and youth care workers;
- Participation in and the leading of multi-disciplinary teams; and
- Life-space counselling.

CYCWs are required to provide both practical and therapeutic assistance. Practical assistance provided by CYCWs includes helping the family with the preparation of meals, cleaning the house with the children and caregivers, accompanying family members to clinics and helping the family with budgeting and financial planning. The therapeutic component includes the teaching of life skills, assessing and referral of children and families to existing services, the transferal of knowledge and skills (HIV, nutrition and education) and life-space counselling.

There are sub-types of CYCWs depending on their training and experience:

- Child and youth care worker: A person who works in the life space of children and adolescents with both normal and special development needs to promote and facilitate optimum development through the planned use of everyday life events and programmes to facilitate their ability to function effectively within different contexts (degree-level qualification).
- Auxiliary child and youth care worker: A person who has obtained the relevant qualification to perform child and youth care worker at an auxiliary level.
- Learner child and youth care worker: A person who is in a learnership programme being trained to enter the field of child and youth care.
- Student child and youth care worker: A person who is in the process of being trained to become a professional child and youth care worker.

Given the above, the DSD would also hold a very clear mandate to participate in, if not lead, on an intervention such as the BPS. Beyond these three departments, there are several other departments with mandates to deliver on a range of services pertinent to the BPS.

## **5.2. Mandates for services integral to the BPS**

A core component of the proposed BPS is to (re)connect youth who are able and willing to available training opportunities. The Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology (DHES) therefore has a central role to play in the BPS.

Across most of the higher education and skills training policies reviewed no particular mention of NEET young people, or groups that could be considered NEET, is made. However, certain policies do make provision for assisting people to transition into skills training. For example, The Further Education and Training Colleges Act (2006) makes provision for “assistance with admission and entry in the transition from not in training to student status.” It does not however indicate *how* this should be done.

The Skills Development Act identifies different types of skills training. These include learnerships and “skills programmes”. Both of these types of programmes are theoretically open to young people who

are NEET, but evidence suggests that, in practice, they may exclude certain groups of NEET youth (particularly those without a matriculation certificate).<sup>18</sup>. The responsibility for planning, funding, and overseeing learnerships and skills programmes lies with SETAs. DHEST has also encouraged SETAs to partner with TVET colleges to ensure that learners are able to access qualifications or part qualifications.<sup>19</sup>

The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III, which currently governs the skills training landscape of the country, makes greater provision for this group, not in name but in the proposals that are put forward. Importantly, it correctly identifies many of the systemic challenges that young people face, and which are pertinent for particular groups of young people who are NEET (words in brackets added):

- The inadequate skills levels and poor work readiness of many young people leaving formal secondary and tertiary education and entering the labour market for the first time (workseekers).
- This is compounded by inadequate linkages between institutional and workplace learning, thus reducing the employability and work readiness of the successful graduates from FET and HET institutions (work seekers with a Post School Education and Training (PSET) qualification), not to mention the many who enter the world of work without a formal qualification (work seekers without a PSET qualification).
- The desperate plight of so many of the longer-term unemployed who lack basic numeracy and literacy, do not possess entry-level skills, and do not have the work experience and work-based training needed to enable them to seek and obtain work (wider category of NEET youth).

It also highlights one of the key challenges, that of systemic blockages such as: a lack of synergy between the various post-school sub-systems (e.g. universities, FET colleges, SETAs); a lack of clarity in relation to the role expected of the various parts of the skills development system; inefficiency and waste; and the silo mentality which prevents the partnerships and alignments needed to improve effectiveness.

While the policy is applicable more widely it does make particular provision for groups that are defined as disadvantaged; specifically youth (15 – 35, broadly defined not differentiated), women, Black African people, people with disabilities, and people living in rural areas. In order to address these challenges, the DHEST mandates itself to support youth to navigate training pathways. The NSDS III makes specific provision for a GUARANTEE of training and work experience in its Goal 4.4. for all school leavers:

*NSDS Outcome 4.4.1: A national strategy is in place to provide all young people leaving school with an opportunity to engage in training or work experience, and improve their employability*

*Output 4.4.1.1: A DHET-led process, including stakeholders, develops a strategy supported by all stakeholders.*

*Output 4.4.1.2: A national database tracks training and work opportunities, and reports on implementation of the strategy.*

*Output 4.4.1.3: The DHET partners with stakeholders in the youth sector to put in place training and work experience projects for young people.*

It also recognises and makes provision for career guidance to be implemented.

The strategy notes that necessary resources to support career and vocational guidance should be dedicated across the skills development system, as this has proved to be a critical component in successful skills development initiatives worldwide. This is a key provision of the NSDS III, and if implemented could overcome some of the challenges with regards to inadequate linkages identified in the policy. The strategy specifically mentions career guidance as follows:

*NSDS Outcome 4.8.1: Career paths are mapped to qualifications in all sectors and sub-sectors, and communicated effectively, contributing to improved relevance of training and greater mobility and progression*

*Output 4.8.1.1: Career guides are developed with labour market information from SETAs, addressing sub-sectors within their sector.*

*Output 4.8.1.2: Sector stakeholders are engaged and programmes are adjusted to meet the skills and qualification needs to promote comprehensive career development.*

The NSDS III recognises that while SETAs should primarily be focused on training of *workers* in their sector (therefore excludes NEET), they should also use discretionary funds to develop and pilot relevant sector-based programmes addressing the needs of unemployed people and first-time entrants to the labour market. In fact, the DHEST has explicitly directed SETAs to increase workplace-based learning opportunities in various learning programmes through the PIVOTAL (Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning Programmes) initiative (more on this in section 6 below).

Given the above provisions there is ample scope for the training elements of a BPS to align with the provisions of the NSDS III. However, the fact that the NSDS III had to be extended to 2020 suggests that implementation has been limited and conversations with DHEST reveal that implementation has largely been limited to getting community colleges up and running as central points of training in communities.

The Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) also has a crucial role to play in a partnership approach. They are mandated through the Skills Development Act to ensure that *prescribed categories of persons* (not defined) are able to a) enter special education and training programmes; b) find employment; c) start income-generating projects; and d) participate in special employment programmes. Labour centres are intended to facilitate this for people requiring support. In part this occurs through Public Employment Services (PES), which includes the registration of job seekers, the registration of vacancies from employers, career counselling and guidance, and referral to skills development opportunities or learning programmes. More information on these programmes is provided in section 5 below. The DEL also has a crucial role to play in the processing of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) applications and payments, which may be pertinent to NEET youth who have worked and/or who require maternity cover.

The Department of Health (DOH) recognises the need for integration given their role in the IHSP (see section 7 below). It also has a clear mandate to deliver health and mental health services to young people. The Adolescent and Youth Health Policy (AYHP) aims to promote the health and well-being of young people, aged 10 – 24 years. It identifies the various risks that South Africa's youth, including: persistent high rates of HIV transmission, tuberculosis, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and substance abuse. The AYHP is intended to aid the DOH to develop inter-departmental programmes with the departments of Basic Education, Higher Education, and Social Development to provide effective health promotion among adolescents and youth in South Africa, and to design and implement health

programmes and services that enhance health and well-being among youth. The AYHP foregrounds the critical role of various government departments and agencies in supporting and streamlining the successful implementation of health programmes, including adolescent and youth-friendly services.

The policy guidelines for child and adolescent mental health provide a framework intended to assist health-care professionals at all levels of health care to devise integrative strategies for providing mental health services to children and adolescents within the primary health care system. The policy guidelines for youth health and child and adolescent mental health (CAMH) were developed between 2001 and 2003. The national child and adolescent policy framework of 2003 was developed to guide the establishment of CAMH policies provincially, using a primary care and inter-sectoral approach.

The guidelines adopt a holistic approach in addressing the various risk and protective factors that can affect the mental health of children and adolescents including the socio-cultural factors that shape and influence behaviour and mental health. The policy defines childhood (birth to 9) and adolescent (12 – 18) and adopts a broad definition of child and adolescent mental health with a focus on promoting development of all children and adolescents, whether they are suffering from mental health problems or not. This can take place through reducing impact of risk factors and enhancing the effects of protective factors. General intervention strategies include the promoting of culturally sensitive, safe and support environments as well as providing information to health-care services, skills development and counselling (with plans to train primary health-care practitioners and educators in basic counselling skills and trauma support).

Provincial plans to support the national policy was recommended in 2003 as the next step of the process. At national level, a national mental health policy exists and children and adolescents are implicitly included in this policy. The Free State province had an outdated stand-alone mental health policy which was due for review in 2009. The updated version could not be accessed from the provincial website. The other eight provinces had no mental health policies. In 2017, no provinces had made the effort to integrate the national CAMH policy into provincial general health policies. None of the provinces had implementation plans to support national CAMH policy. Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have acknowledged in general health policies the need to separate children and adolescents from adults and to strengthen CAMH capacity. It is clear therefore that although there is a mandate to promote mental health support there are also glaring gaps. Importantly, CAMH policies and plans have not been developed at provincial level, which is the level responsible for implementation of health services; and the national policy only makes provision for younger youth (adolescents up to the age of 18 years).

The Department of Health also has an important mandate in the delivery of primary health-care services and the oversight of community health workers (CHWs), who may be important allies in the delivery of the BPS where a young person requires health support. The Policy Framework and Strategy for Ward-Based Primary Healthcare Outreach Teams mandates the DOH to train and oversee a cohort of CHWs who act as the first line of support between the community and various health and social development services. The role of the CHCW is to empower community members to make informed choices about their health and psychological well-being, as well as provide ongoing care and support to individuals and families considered vulnerable.

Given limited growth in jobs in the formal labour market, a critical element of supporting youth to attain sustainable livelihoods may involve entrepreneurship development. The Department of Small Business

Development therefore could play a key role in the BPS. It has a mandate through The Youth Enterprise Development Strategy, which identifies its target market as made up of older youth (18 – 35 years) who are able to legally enter into contracts as adults; and younger youth (14 – 17 years) who need parental consent to enter into contracts. As the focus is on small enterprise development, the main focus is older youth, although the strategy does make provision for programmes targeted at younger youth. These are primarily focused on promoting entrepreneurship rather than supporting youth enterprises. The primary programmes are therefore targeted at those young people who have started or want to start a small enterprise. It therefore does not exclude youth who are NEET, but it also does not mention them as a particular target group with particular needs. The strategy identifies several programmes that are available specifically to youth but also notes that all enterprise development programmes should have a 30% quota dedicated to youth enterprises. More information on these is provided in section 6 below.

The Department of Basic Education has a distinct mandate to deliver quality education to all; and while they are supposed to deliver services that keep young people connected to the education system, their mandate is largely preventive. The DBE's mandate therefore largely focuses on promoting quality education and reducing school dropout in the adolescent years.

The Policy on Progression has been applicable in the General Education and Training (GET) band (Grade R to Grade 9) since Curriculum 2005, and has been applied to the FET band (Grade 10 to Grade 12) since 2013. In terms of the Regulations pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12, promulgated on 28 December 2012, a learner may only be retained once in the phase in order to prevent the learner from spending more than four years in a phase. This implies that a learner who fails a grade for the second time cannot be retained in the grade, but must be allowed to progress to the next grade. However, such a learner, at the end of Grade 12, must satisfy all the requirements of the National Senior Certificate (NSC), in order to be awarded the matric certificate. The rationale behind the policy on progression is to minimise the high dropout rate and maximise school retention. The intention is that instead of forcing these learners to consistently repeat a grade, rather give them the opportunity to progress to the next grade, and provide them the additional support. It also needs to be noted that a learner who fails the grade for the second time is not automatically progressed. Learners must meet the minimum requirements to be progressed to Grade 12. The drawback to this policy is that many learners are progressed without having fully absorbed the learnings of previous grades and do not necessarily meet certain criteria, in addition to the basic requirement of not spending more than four years in the phase, before they are progressed.

The DBE Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030 has a number of goals (14 to 27) focused on how to improve the quality of schooling towards getting learners to achieve the NSC. It has become increasingly accepted that, whilst some results can be achieved through “last minute” interventions targeted at the final years of schooling, it is only through improving learning and teaching at the primary level that large improvements in the throughput rates of the schooling system will be seen. In particular, Goals 10 and 12 are focused on retaining children in school at least up until the year they turn 15, the legal minimum age, and improving grade attainment. DBE and parents of learners are responsible for ensuring that children attend school and remain in school (SA Schools Act, Section 3) *“from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.”*

DBE acknowledges that many learners repeat grades and drop out at around age 15, without having reached Grade 9 yet. They state that the problem needs to be tackled largely through quality education interventions, which strengthen the capacity of teachers and give all youth a sense of hope in their schooling. The LURITS49 system, which is meant to keep a record of each individual learner in the public and independent schooling systems, is identified in the plan as an important tool for understanding the phenomenon of early school leavers and for developing strategies to follow up on the most serious cases.

Goal 13 focuses on improving access for youth to TVET beyond Grade 9. One important initiative that is mentioned is aimed at making the Grades 10 – 12 subject mix more responsive to the interests of a variety of students via the Technical Secondary Schools Recapitalisation Grant. This grant focuses on increasing access to the five technical and vocationally-oriented subjects: engineering, graphics and design, civil technology, electrical technology, and mechanical technology. Some public schools offering Grade 12 offer at least one technical subject. These schools are relatively well distributed across the country.

Career guidance is another focus that should be incorporated within and beyond the subject Life Orientation to support learners to select appropriate subject combinations as they enter Grade 10. DBE recognises the failures of career guidance to date and reports that there are a number of initiatives to strengthen career guidance, some of them the result of partnerships with employers. But they identify that good career guidance needs to become more accessible to learners through a multi-stakeholder approach. Importantly, career guidance is delivered at school and thus DBE has no mandate to deliver this guidance to NEET youth.

In fact, the above goals all relate to keeping young people in school. These are important programmes, but not directly relevant to the implementation of a BPS, which focuses on how to connect young people who have already left school to a range of services. However, DBE has a central role to play in highlighting why young people are leaving school, potentially providing early “flags” of young people who are about to or have just dropped out of school, or tracking learners who have been out of school for some time. In this regard Goal 27 is important.

Goal 27 is focused on improving the frequency and quality of monitoring and support services for schools, by district offices, partly through the use of digital platforms. Several steps have been taken to strengthen the capacity of districts to support schools in the last few years, including a critical initiative implemented in partnership with the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation – the Data-Driven District Dashboard (DDDD). In 2012, a direct line of communication was created between the national DBE and the country’s 86 district directors via quarterly meetings to brainstorm key policy imperatives and challenges faced by districts. This allows for regular interaction between district directors from across the country to share experiences and ideas. In 2013 an official policy on the functions and responsibilities of districts was finalised, a necessary basis for arguing for better resourcing of district offices. The DDDD provides support for interpreting and sharing information in the South African schooling system, in particular at the district level, to assist in the pursuit of teaching and learning goals. It offers a valuable basis for understanding challenges at an individual, school, district and provincial level, including identification of learners’ absenteeism trends and those who have left the schooling system. The limitations of the digital platform are that not all districts are covered by it, in particular

the Western Cape is not part of the system; and challenges with collecting and capturing the data which can render the data in the system unreliable.

The intention is that each district needs to take stock of how it uses information, in particular Grade 12 examinations and ANA results, and information on dropping out, to understand and manage education outcomes in the district. In addition, each district should include within its plans a focus on how more time and effort can be shifted towards the interpretation of information to shape intervention strategies. A variety of standard reports can be generated, using data that has been collected for some years, to assist district and school managers, as well as parents and social workers, in taking the right decisions to support learners. The Dell Foundation continues to support the DDDD computerised school management system (linked to SA-SAMS), to serve decision-making in schools and districts and has invested over R250 million in the project thus far. This is an important initiative that could underpin a possible system of “flagging” at-risk youth or those who have recently dropped out of school. However, it is undermined by the Policy on Learner Attendance 2010, which notes that a learner’s record in the class register will be cancelled if they are: expelled; transferred; notified by parent they won’t be returning; continuous absence (for more than 10 days); death of the learner; or is receiving home education. The principal must inform the parent, and if the child is under compulsory school-going age, he/she must inform the district office. This means that while there are mechanisms to identify young people just as they exit the schooling system for youth up to the age of 15, older youth (15 – 18 years) are unlikely to be formally “flagged” when they exit the system, making it more difficult to reach these young people through the formal systems and institutions.

The Draft National Rural Education Policy, 2017, also outlines interventions aimed at improving the quality of learning in rural schools, and strategies to reduce dropout. An interesting policy initiative in this policy is the provision for the recruitment of young people (matriculants and unemployed graduates) as volunteers in curriculum support (numeracy, literacy, reading, ICT and homework), administrative support, as well as sports and culture. The intention is to recruit and train local young people to enter the teaching profession, as well as mobilising the school community in development initiatives (agriculture, mining, fishing, wildlife management, nutrition). This may be an important initiative to connect young people in rural areas to.

### **5.3. Summary**

From the assessment of policies, it has emerged that the NYDA, the MWYPD, and the DSD have the most obvious mandates to lead on an integrated intervention such as the BPS. Amongst these, the DSD probably has the greatest capacity to deliver given the cohort of social service professionals that they are tasked with overseeing. However, several departments have clear complementary roles to play. These include the DEL through PES and the provision of UIF; DHEST in terms of the provision of various training pathways; DOH through the provision of primary and mental health care; Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) in supporting youth entrepreneurship; and the DBE in terms of facilitating connections back into schooling (where relevant) and “flagging” young people who drop out of school and who should be referred to the BPS. A review of existing services and programmes reveals additional mechanisms that the BPS can connect to as well as other departments that need to form part of an integrated collaborative approach to supporting youth. Indeed, several departments are already implementing critical services that would form a core part of the BPS and it is to these that the review now turns.

## 6. Existing programmes and services

The review clearly reveals that significant investments in young people have been made across departments. Any integrated approach to youth should therefore leverage rather than duplicate these efforts. Even in situations where delivery and implementation have been uneven or poor, there is a need to work alongside such programmes, given the significant resource investments, to improve service delivery. We discuss the interventions in relation to employment/labour-absorption programmes; employment services; health services; education and training services; financial assistance; and other relevant programmes.

### 6.1. Employment and labour-absorption programmes

Although there has been a long-standing commitment to developing and sustaining programmes to improve the employment prospects of young people, this has intensified in recent years. The Youth Employment Accord (outlined in section 5 above) makes several commitments that were supposed to galvanise action across the state, civil society and private sectors. The Department of Economic Development (DED) is the custodian of the accord and an interview with an official suggests that delivery on the promises of the accord have been limited. This is due to the fact that the promises are removed from the realities of what departments are doing and there is therefore no traction at departmental level. Further, where initiatives are carried out there are often no data, no budget and no implementation plan, at least not ones that can be fed into the monitoring of the accord. Critical to the failures has been the lack of a central coordination mechanism to drive the initiatives. Nevertheless, several initiatives have been informed by the accord, including the EPWP.

By far the largest investment in services and programmes available to youth are public employment programmes – the Expanded Public Works Programme, the Community Works Programme, the NYS and the National Rural Youth Service Corps. While the latter two are not formally public employment programmes, they do work in partnership with EPWP in practice and the programmes are very similar. NYS and NARYSEC are service opportunities in which young people are involved in development in their local communities for a year and four years, respectively. They are also afforded training opportunities through registered training providers during this time. The New Growth Path also identifies a number of further “youth brigades” as opportunities to absorb young work seekers. In the section *Jobs Driver 4: Investing in social capital and public services*, the document refers to the establishment of “rural, literacy, green and HIV-education youth brigades that engage up to a million young people over the next few years, combined with measures to expose young people to work experience through internships in the private and public sectors”. It seems to refer to the Youth Brigades as a new youth employment scheme that is to complement existing EPWP and CWP. In addition, the Plan puts forward a “substantial expansion in the CWP” to reach 40% of the poorest wards in the country.

Across all these programmes the definition of youth is inclusive and broad, and NEET youth would therefore be eligible to participate in them. Young people who are NEET are mentioned specifically only in the Green Paper on National Youth Service, which refers to the need to support and respond to “at risk youth” and “youth out of school and unemployed”. Although the NYS is a national programme, in recent years it has primarily been delivered in rural areas.<sup>20</sup> NARYSEC, as the name suggests, focuses specifically on youth living in rural areas and thus may be a critical programme to refer young people in

these areas to. However, it is a long-term programme (up to four years), focused on service and training and leaves young people with a qualification that is equivalent to a matric (NQF 4).

Both the programmes make specific reference to vulnerable youth (usually defined as women, rural youth and in very few instances youth with disabilities). NEET youth are not explicitly mentioned as a vulnerable group. However, given the heterogeneity within the group of NEET youth they may well be catered for under one of the other sub-categories, and would certainly not be excluded given that the policies are intended to apply to youth broadly. Neither of these programmes require a matriculation certificate, meaning that in theory they may include youth who have exited school early and not reconnected to the system.

The EPWP and the CWP indicate that youth (broadly defined) are amongst the target beneficiaries and both set specific targets for youth; 40% of beneficiaries are intended to be between 18 and 35 years of age. The EPWP aims to reach participants who have no tertiary education and have been unemployed for some time, indicating that the kinds of young people that they reach are amongst the most vulnerable in terms of education and employment. The youth targets are consistently met and exceeded according to departmental annual reports.

CWP offers an opportunity to be engaged in part-time work over a period of time, which provides a guaranteed level of income. The EPWP offers a fixed-term, full-time work opportunity, usually for a short period (an average of four months). During engagement in the work, participants receive a stipend and EPWP participants are also involved in training. CWP participants may also be exposed to training although this is not an explicit offering of the programmes. Both programmes have large youth targets that are reportedly consistently met.<sup>21</sup> In practice, the EPWP youth targets seem to be met, in part, by partnering with the NYS programme.

NYS has a specific exit framework identifying further education, work opportunities with local contractors and support for developing SMMEs and cooperatives as possible exit routes. The framework does state that facilitating these exit points relies on external buy-in as it is not a funded component of the programme. NARYSEC also identifies exit strategies, specifically support for entrepreneurship development, but does not articulate how this should be done and who is responsible. The actual implementation of facilitating these exit routes thus relies on individual programme managers facilitating networks with potential employers rather than this being part of the core function of the programme. The exit framework for youth participating in EPWP is aligned with the exit framework for NYS.

Taken together, these programmes perhaps reach the largest number of young people who are not in employment, education or training of any government-run programme. A review of annual reports shows that the programmes reach the following numbers annually:

**Table 2: Annual Reach of Public Employment and Service Programmes**

Programme	Annual reach
EPWP & CWP	353 390 <sup>22</sup>
NARYSEC	2 700 <sup>23</sup>
NYS	6 000 <sup>24</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>368 090</b>

Numbers for EPWP are a matter of debate. An interview with an official from EPWP shows that the programme has created two million work opportunities over the past five years, equating to approximately 55% of the number of the total work opportunities created. However, this includes the work opportunities created in partnership with the NYS.

Regardless of the performance of these programmes, the fact that they reach such large numbers of young people makes them an ideal connection point for reaching youth who may be eligible for the BPS.

All of these programmes have been reviewed and evaluated. Here we present a summary of the findings to inform our thinking about the connection of the BPS with such programmes.

The EPWP has been extensively reviewed, both in its entirety and the composite parts of it (Infrastructure, Environment, Social, and Non-State). Evaluations of the EPWP have been reviewed to provide an overall picture of the effectiveness of the EPWP.<sup>25</sup> That review reveals that the EPWP has been very effective in absorbing labour (providing short-term work opportunities) and in reaching the targets in terms of total number of beneficiaries and designated beneficiaries (including the 40% youth target). However, it has been criticised on two main points; 1) the training targets and 2) facilitating access to jobs in the open labour market. Regarding training, criticisms include that training targets have not been met and that the kind of training leaves participants with low skills levels. With regard to access to promoting employment and employability the programme has been criticised.<sup>26</sup> This may be because it provides only low-skill jobs that do not really afford participants the opportunity for on-the-job training.<sup>27</sup> Although The DPW<sup>28</sup> notes that more than 70% of beneficiaries are employed after participating in the programme, it concedes that the majority of these are re-employed in a short-term EPWP programme.

Pilot evaluations of the CWP have demonstrated that where training did occur (training is not a core component of the programme, unlike EPWP) the training was viewed as useful and did, in some cases, lead to progression in securing work. This was largely because where training was requested, it was for specialised skills which had a higher chance of being marketable in the open labour market.<sup>29</sup>

NARYSEC and NYS both provide training opportunities to participants over a period of four years and one year respectively. NARYSEC training has been criticised on two issues; first that the training providers struggle to absorb the numbers of NARYSEC participants and that participants cannot complete their training because they are unable to access on-the-job placements<sup>30</sup> and, second, that they go through four years of training but leave without any certificate<sup>31</sup>. The NYS training has not been evaluated.

Of particular importance to the design of the BPS is that there are criticisms regarding the exit pathways across EPWP, NARYSEC and NYS. In a DPME review of EPWP, including NARYSEC and NYS, it was noted that, in rural areas specifically, “there is no comprehensive exit strategy in place to ensure that recruits can use skills attained to be self-employed or alternatively to be placed with existing enterprises”.<sup>32</sup> As indicated above, although the policy frameworks for all the programmes discuss exit opportunities, the actual implementation of exit strategies is reliant on available funding and partnerships as well as the initiative on the part of individual programme managers. This results in very few participants exit the programmes with clear pathways in going forward.

The interview with an EPWP official demonstrates that they have made efforts to formalise exit pathways through partnerships, primarily with the SETAs. For instance, they are trying to establish a partnership with the construction SETA to link participants to learnerships to create “some sort of pipeline.” However, they have found that youth participants are generally averse to the construction industry. This points to the need to guide young people into opportunities that align with their own trajectory and goals. They are also working with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (MERSETA) to place EPWP participants. However, a key challenge, according to the EPWP interviewee, has been MERSETA’s preference for engaging learners who are already working in private companies to upgrade skills. This means that there have been difficulties in placing EPWP participants onto these programmes for training.

Given the extensive reach of the programmes, but the poor implementation of exit strategies, **the BPS could potentially play a clear partnership role with the programmes being recruitment sites for BPS participants and ensuring that participants can access the BPS intervention that can, in turn, facilitate a process of converting their EPWP, CWP, NYS or NARYSEC experiences into their work search or education pathways.**

The most recent intervention intended to promote employment of young people is the Employment Tax Incentive (ETI). The NDP also includes a reference to the Employment Tax Incentive as well as the possibility of providing a subsidy to the “placement sector” (i.e. intermediaries such as recruitment agencies) to “identify, prepare and place matric graduates into work”. This phrasing suggests a willingness to pro-actively reach out to young matriculants, but the plan does not explicitly describe how this would be implemented and which department would coordinate (and resource) this effectively and efficiently. Further, it overlooks young NEETs who did not complete matric. Nevertheless, the thinking is to stimulate demand and labour market efficiency to support youth to employment. Such mechanisms can be used to encourage employers and intermediaries, but are unlikely to form a direct part of the BPS, which focuses primarily on services for young people themselves.

Given challenges with absorbing young people into the open labour market, there is a sustained emphasis on supporting youth entrepreneurship. Several government programmes relate to this, including the NYDA’s entrepreneurship support fund, and several programmes run the DSBD. These programmes include:

- Youth entrepreneurship awards;
- Sector-specific youth catalytic projects;
- Take a young person to work programme;
- Youth entrepreneurship collateral fund;
- Entrepreneurship mentorship and coaching programme;
- Youth entrepreneurship awareness and promotion programme;
- Business incubation for young entrepreneur;s
- Business Development Support Services for Youth Enterprises;

The DSBD also refers to the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA). Both report to the DSBD. Their annual reports note that youth are identified as a specific target group to receive their training and financing offerings. The SEFA makes loans available to young entrepreneurs through the NYDA. In the 2016/2017 SEDA annual report the agency notes that

just under 5 000 youth-owned, small businesses were supported with training.<sup>33</sup> Over two years, the SEDA supported 13 722 youth-owned businesses. The SEFA notes that, in 2017, over R204 million was disbursed to 104 youth-owned enterprises. These loans typically reach youth entrepreneurs located in the major metropolitan areas and SEFA notes that they underperformed in supporting township-based and rural businesses.<sup>34</sup> It is unclear how sustainable these youth-owned enterprises are but international and local evidence suggests that youth entrepreneurship has to be supported through integrated training and support programmes, not only financing.<sup>35</sup> Incubation and training programmes for entrepreneurship development are therefore important for young people who are interested in self-employment as a career pathway.

## **6.2. Employment services**

There are two main points for employment services, managed at the national level. The first is the JOBS database – an initiative of the NYDA. Young people register on the database and employers looking for young employees can search the database and approach work seekers. The JOBS database is simply that – a database. The NYDA does not run any employability training programmes or support youth to improve their CVs or interviewing skills. No evaluation of the JOBS database has been done and it is not clear how effective it is, or how often it is updated. However, it is a potential data source for young people in need of support through the BPS.

The Employment Services South Africa (ESSA) database is run by the DEL. It is not youth specific but young people are eligible to register on it. It operates on a similar basis to the JOBS database in that individuals can register their CVs on the database and employers can search it to identify potential candidates. However, interviews with DEL officials reveal that the department also uses the database to communicate with participants; for instance, where they know there are calls out for jobs in particular areas or when DEL officials will be visiting areas to provide career counselling, training or advice. According to participants of the DEL consultation, there are currently 4.6 million people on the database. There are limited reviews of ESSA, particularly from the point of view of work seekers. The only review to date has focused on employer experiences of the portal and it notes that the database is typically viewed as a source of information on intermediate and low-skilled work seekers, which is at odds with their requirements for employees with higher skills levels.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to ESSA, DEL officials noted a range of services, including youth-friendly services (sometimes delivered in partnership with the NYDA) that are offered at their 126 labour centres (open weekdays), 426 visiting points (open once a week), and 76 Thusong centres (open weekdays), as well as their mobile employment services. The services include career counselling guidance and support, online education and training tools, referral to education and training opportunities, referral to EPWP or CWP, and support to build CVs. In addition, the DEL note that they do encounter the range of socio-economic challenges that work seekers face and that their career counsellors are equipped to refer youth to centres and to connect with other departments for services. Given the national infrastructure, both in terms of actual labour centres and visiting points, as well as staff, there is significant potential to work collaboratively with the DEL to deliver on various services. However, this will require ongoing monitoring and support to improve services where necessary.

### 6.3. Education and training services

A range of state-run education and training opportunities are available for the BPS to refer youth to. Across a range of policy documents, including the NYDA Act and the Youth Employment Accord, there are a number of references to second-chance matric. This is a programme run by the DBE and is intended to provide learners who failed matric or who did not get their desired results to rewrite all or some of their subjects. It also provides support through face-to-face classes (often at adult basic education and training or community colleges) as well as online programmes and television and radio broadcasts. Learners are able to rewrite in March, June and November, depending on the nature of their matric experience and results. This is a critical programme to engage with if learners have almost completed matric, although little is known about its success rate.

In addition to university and TVET college training opportunities, the DHEST has been focusing on expanding professional, vocational, technical and academic learning (PIVOTAL) opportunities. These include Artisan development opportunities, learnerships and internships. According to DHET<sup>37</sup> the number of PIVOTAL opportunities that have been created between 2012 and 2015:

**Table 3: Number of PIVOTAL opportunities 2012 - 2015**

PIVOTAL training type	Goal for 2012 – 2015	Number of actual opportunities (2012 – 2015)
Artisan development	52 110	55 282
Learnerships	240 565	247 802
Internships (college and university graduates)	43 918	37 232
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>336 593</b>	<b>340 316</b>

This means that, assuming a broadly similar number of opportunities are created annually, each year there are just over 85 000 opportunities available. It should be noted that these figures were prior to the implementation of the Youth Employment Service (YES) programme, which operates primarily through learnerships; so these figures may increase over time.

The directive to expand PIVOTAL training opportunities is in direct response to the increasing NEET problem.<sup>38</sup> These programmes are likely to be able to reach NEET but there are challenges. DHET has admitted that there is no standardisation in the delivery of PIVOTAL programmes across the SETAs and that for each SETA there are different systems, processes and procedures, which make it difficult for external stakeholders to comprehend the system.<sup>39</sup> Young people in particular would find it difficult to understand and navigate the systems. This is partly to do with the fact that linkages between the different PSET actors in the system is poor. There is a need to improve working relations between higher education institutions, TVET colleges, SETAs and employers and to ensure that offerings between the different stakeholders connect so that young people can travel more smoothly between the different options and towards employment.

Through the SETAs, there is also provision for incentives for training and skills development capacity in the cooperative, non-governmental and trade union sectors, including community and worker education initiatives, contributing to effective training of youth and adults. Those run through trade unions will likely exclude NEET youth but those run through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may attract NEET youth. However, an official at the DHEST consultation also noted that incentives are

tied more clearly to learnerships, making the expansion of internships (which are easier to access) difficult to promote.

The NSFAS is a critical element of services that can support youth who do manage to access university or TVET studies. It provides partial or full funding to students who qualify on the means test to receive such support. The support is in the form of a loan, repayable upon completion of studies. There are several challenges with NSFAS funding. Students often report receiving the funding late and not realising that the loan does not cover all of their costs of studying. Nevertheless, it is an important service that can support youth to achieve tertiary qualifications where they qualify and wish to do so.

#### **6.4. Health services**

Although all public health services are available to young people, they often face challenges in accessing these services, particularly when it comes to sexual and reproductive health. The National Adolescent Friendly Clinic Initiative (NAFCI) was intended to address these challenges by promoting spaces at clinics where young people could feel safe to come and find out information about contraception and family planning without judgement. According to the World Health Organization<sup>40</sup>, the programme intended to:

- Make health services accessible and acceptable to adolescents;
- Establish national standards and criteria for adolescent health care in clinics throughout the country;
- Build the capacity of health-care workers to provide high-quality adolescent health services.

Currently there is still acknowledgement that adolescents and youth face specific challenges and needs in relation not accessing health services. The Department of Health therefore continues to run a programme to provide appropriate and sensible services that recognise the particular needs of adolescents and youth in clinics and in the community. The essential service package of the Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services includes mental health education and counselling as well as referral to related services, including TB and HIV interventions. Some have also suggested incorporating the NAFCI quality improvement guidelines into the community health worker training and competencies to ensure that young people are better able to access health-related information and services.<sup>41</sup>

#### **6.5. Financial assistance**

Two main forms of financial assistance are available for youth, but these are dependent on eligibility. The first is cash grants (as outlined in section 5 above) and UIF for those who have worked before and have recently become unemployed or on maternity leave.

Aside from the existing cash grants that certain youth may be eligible for, there have been several proposals to expand social protection to cover youth up to the age of 21. The Policy Framework for Social Security for Youth, commissioned by the Directorate of Children and Family Benefits at the national DSD in 2012 identifies the problem of young people not being adequately covered by the social security system in South Africa. Their document acknowledges that young people want jobs and not social security, however, the causes of young peoples' inability to find employment is predominately structural (i.e. too few jobs).

It notes that social security should not be viewed as an alternative to jobs but as a “form of income maintenance in the absence of employment”. Social security includes social insurance, social assistance and social allowances (social allowance is also considered as a form of social security as well as a once-off payment).

The proposal outlines categories of youth and indicates the number of youth in each category at the time the framework was developed. It differentiates between unemployed youth, inactive youth: “young people between the ages of 18-24 who are neither working nor studying (37.5% out of 18-24 year olds), discouraged job seekers: young people who had given up looking for work and had lower educational achievements than their unemployed counterparts (16% of 18-24 year olds), and underemployed youth”.

The proposal is based on the following principles:

- The opportunity to which access is being improved must already exist – intervention must not be set up anew.
- Social security will have positive impact on youth development.
- Policy is defining youth unemployment as “an unavoidable risk that undermines their capacity to continue earning income”.

The proposed intervention has two parts: 1.) provision of information; and 2.) a subsidy or voucher. It considers six policy scenarios. We have added how these scenarios would/would not reach youth who are NEET:

**Table 4: Proposed policy scenarios for increasing income support to youth, with comments on potential provision for NEET youth**

<b>Summary of the six policy scenarios:</b>	<b>Ability to reach youth who are NEET</b>
Social allowance: Universal grant for 18 – 24-year-olds inclusive at CSG rate	Would provide support to all NEET youth
Social assistance: Means-tested grant for 18 – 24-year-olds inclusive at CSG rate	Would provide support to low-income NEET youth
Social assistance: Means-tested grant for 18 – 24s inclusive at CSG rate, plus top up to Old Age Grant (OAG) rate if in education/training.	Would provide support to low-income NEET youth
Social assistance: Means-tested grant for 18 – 24-year-olds inclusive, but only if in education/training, at OAG rate.	Would not provide any support for youth who are need NEET
Once-off payment of R2 500 to recipients of CSG or FCG, doubled if pass matric.	Would provide support for all NEET youth in receipt of CSG and FCG
Social Assistance: Means-tested grant for 18-24-year-olds inclusive, but only if unemployed or in education/training at CSG rate	Would provide support for all low-income NEET youth that identified themselves as unemployed

The DSD continues to debate the issue of extending the CSG as the proposal has not been adopted. Informal conversations with employees at DSD reveal that they view the youth wage subsidy, which was adopted as a policy proposal by the ANC in 2012 and then implemented in the form of the ETI, as having replaced discussions about social assistance to youth. However, in 2016, in its contribution to

the annual *South African Child Gauge*, the DSD proposed extending the CSG to youth aged up to 21 years, provided they were still in education or training.<sup>42</sup> Further, a recent National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) discussion document argues that the benefits of the CSG in childhood do not necessarily extend into the early adulthood years and that efforts focused on improving the human capability of young people through education and training and employment services should be prioritised. Further, they argue that welfare services for children and adolescents are sorely lacking and this also undermines the ability of young people to succeed. Even if financial assistance is extended, this should be complemented by investing in services to young people that can assist them on their transition to work.<sup>43</sup> Evidently therefore, the discussions about extending social assistance to young people remain a debate for the department. Any discussion of income support that forms part of the BPS would need to accept that efforts to promote income support in the form of social assistance to youth would need to be located in these ongoing debates and weigh up where to place priority for budgeting purposes.

Although the UIF is currently only available to people who have contributed to the fund, according to consultations with officials at DEL, there are some investigations into how to use UIF funds to also benefit those who are looking for work. The parameters of this proposal were not provided but it was made clear that even if they did manage to make a proposal, the funds in the UIF would be insufficient to address the need.

It thus seems that direct financial assistance from the state to young people who are not currently eligible will not be a possibility in the BPS. However, an important element of the BPS will be to understand whether young people or members of their household are eligible for social assistance and to support them to access what they are legally entitled to. In addition, several programmes, including the EPWP, CWP, NARYSEC, NYS, and employability programmes run in the not-for-profit and private sectors, include stipends. Financial inclusion and capability interventions that assist young people to manage such funds could therefore be included in a BPS.

## **6.6. Mechanisms to deliver the BPS**

For the purposes of the BPS, CYCWs seem to be the most obvious group of social service professionals to engage in any kind of intervention. However, it should be noted that the CYCW programme stemmed out of a) a need to support children living in residential facilities and; b) the recognition that the HIV pandemic was rendering more children orphaned and in need of support. CYCWs are therefore largely orientated to delivering services to children and particularly vulnerable youth. By far the largest programme involving CYCWs has been Isibindi, which originated as a programme to support orphans and other vulnerable children. These roots mean that the CYCW training is largely orientated to children and youth made vulnerable through being orphaned.<sup>44</sup> This means that, while currently trained CYCWs have a good set of basic skills potentially relevant to the BPS, there will be a need to retrain many to focus on the needs of a) youth (as opposed to children) and; b) a wider cohort of youth than they are perhaps used to working with.

SAWs and CDWs may also form a part of the BPS, particularly in terms of their skills in mapping services and in referring young people to services. Social workers may also need to play a role where therapy, counselling and other higher-level interventions are required.

If the BPS is to engage with social service professionals it is important to know how many such professionals are available. Numbers are not particularly reliable but where information has been available we have included it here.

According to DSD<sup>45</sup>, when the scale-up of Isibindi was planned, the intention was to increase the number of CYCWs to 10 000 by 2015 as follows:

**Table 5: Planned number of CYCWs per province by 2015**

Province	N
Eastern Cape	1 425
Free State	650
Gauteng	1 925
KwaZulu Natal	2 825
Limpopo	825
Mpumalanga	925
NC	125
NW	775
EC	527

All these CYCWs have been trained by the National Association of Child Care Workers. In addition, there are approximately 16 000 SWs and 300 ASWs in South Africa, and an estimated 4 000 CDWs.

## **7. Existing and historical collaborations between departments**

During the consultations and reviews several collaborations between departments and at the level of the Presidency were identified. These offer lessons for inter-departmental collaborations as well as opportunities that might be leveraged to promote the BPS at policy level. We also considered one of the key historical inter-governmental collaborations that has the clearest link with what the BPS aims to achieve – the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA).

### **7.1. The Integrated School Health Policy (IHSP)**

The ISHP provides for coordinated and effective school health services as an important strategy for achieving “Education for All”. Collaboration between all role players is required, with the departments of Health, Basic Education and Social Development taking joint responsibility for ensuring that the ISHP reaches all learners in all schools. They are responsible for providing a more comprehensive package of services, which addresses not only barriers to learning, but also other conditions which contribute to morbidity and mortality amongst learners during both childhood and adulthood. ISHP initially targets the most disadvantaged schools, with plans for progressive implementation to ensure that all learners are reached.

The policy addresses issues of dropout, with specific mention of child-headed households where challenges experienced are related to poverty, hunger and other forms of deprivation, absenteeism

and school dropout. Together with educators, social workers and the school community, school health services should ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children are identified and referred appropriately to psychosocial support services.

In addition to ill-health, it is recognised that children infected or affected by HIV and AIDS are more likely to drop out of or underperform at school due to a range of psychosocial factors, and thus coordinated support must be provided.

The objectives of the policy are:

- *“To provide preventive and promotive services that address the health needs of school-going children and youth with regard to both their immediate and future health*
- *To support and facilitate learning through identifying and addressing health barriers to learning*
- *To facilitate access to health and other services where required*
- *To support the school community in creating a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning.”*

Children specifically not covered by this policy and its programmes include pre-school children, children of school-going age not attending school for various reasons and those who have completed Grade 12.

Where learners are identified as requiring health and other services that cannot be provided on-site through routine school health services, mechanisms must be put in place for ensuring that learners access these services via: specialised school health mobiles; and fixed facilities including primary health care clinics, community health centres and hospitals. The DSD will be responsible for assisting learners to access services, particularly where financial barriers to accessing services are present. This includes providing transport to health facilities where necessary.

The national and provincial departments of Health, Basic Education and Social Development must ensure co-ordination between all the relevant service providers related to the school health programme. Regular meetings are necessary to ensure that the collaboration required for the implementation of the policy is achieved at all levels.

## **7.2. The National Collaboration Framework**

The framework to improve education outcomes was agreed upon by government, civil society, private sector and union stakeholders in 2011, and includes a flexible plan, focusing on district improvement, which stretches to 2023. The National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), established in 2013, is aimed at facilitating non-government involvement in education innovation initiatives, in particular at the district level. The NECT is intended to expand the range of opportunities and strengthen ties between stakeholders.

The National Education Council is a vehicle for interaction on basic education policy matters. These structures can be utilised to support the schooling system by identifying, implementing and evaluating best practices.

## **7.3. Draft School Co-Curricular and Enrichment Policy 2019**

The School Co-curricular and Enrichment Policy (SCEP) seeks to provide learners at public schools with access to co-curricular and enrichment programmes in sports, arts and culture, academics and life skills,

after formal school hours to enable every learner to excel and seize future opportunities. This policy should be delivered through a partnership between various government departments, spheres of government, the private sector and the non-governmental sector. It is also critical to identify and bring community initiatives and resources into schools, and involve parents. It is intended to inspire learners and develop their talents and potential future careers. Given that it is a new initiative, little is known about how it will be managed and implemented.

#### **7.4. DSD and DHEST collaboration to support the transition of CSG beneficiaries into higher education**

Interviews with DSD officials revealed that there is currently an initiative by which CSG beneficiaries who qualify for university access should automatically meet the means test for accessing the NSFAS. The collaboration requires that the SOCPEN data and the LURITZ data are brought together to identify eligible candidates and that details are then transferred to NSFAS. The initiative was driven by the DSD through an inter-departmental collaboration with DBE, DHEST and DSD. It is still relatively new and thus has not been reviewed.

#### **7.5. Presidential Working Group on Youth**

In 2017, then-President Jacob Zuma launched the Presidential Working Group on Youth, which brought together government and youth organisations, to promote youth participation in governance and policymaking. It is unclear what the status of this working group is currently.

#### **7.6. Education for Employment**

This programme, supported by the EU and facilitated through National Treasury, brings together representatives from DBE, DHEST and DEL to consider ways in which they can develop initiatives and coordinate services to improve the “pipeline” from school to work. It is a new collaboration and thus little information is available about its nature and activities, suffice to say that it has managed to garner high-level support from the departments concerned.

#### **7.7. The President’s Youth Intervention (also known as the President’s 5X5 initiative)**

The 5X5 committee is a specially convened group of experts drawn together to develop strategies to promote youth employment and education. To date they have developed five strategies that are intended to be implemented over the next five years with the aim to reduce youth unemployment. The committee is convened by the Presidency and will inform his special projects going forward. To date no public announcements about the strategies have been made.

#### **7.8. Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition**

JIPSA was an initiative set up in 2006 to address the issue of skills shortages that were constraining South Africa’s economic growth. It was recognised early on that several departments were responsible for identifying skills needs and ensuring that the systems of training were progressively addressing

those needs as outlined in the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGI-SA). The purpose of JIPSA was as follows:

*The overarching goal of Jipsa was defined as developing strategies for fast-tracking priority and scarce skills and unblocking obstacles in the skills development system to support ASGI-SA's objectives. It was clear at its establishment that an unusual approach, distinctive from prevailing skills development arrangements, needed to be adopted to secure quick wins and build momentum for prioritizing the skills acquisition agenda nationally, without alienating agents already tasked with skills development or negating their current efforts.<sup>46</sup>*

The multi-stakeholder approach took the form of a high-level secretariat, a task team, and a technical working group. It did not have an institutional location within a government department but was rather seen as an external facilitating entity that could galvanise action through the departments best placed to deliver on the initiatives. This approach was deemed appropriate because it would be able to work more responsively and quickly outside of government than through existing bureaucratic channels. The review of JIPSA suggests that while outcomes were slower than anticipated, stakeholders did perceive the initiative to be more nimble than traditional processes. They also felt that JIPSA's strategy of working through persuasion and consensus amongst the core stakeholders was a strength. Its location outside of government also allowed it to stay out of the political fray which may have derailed it. However, its success relied heavily on the high-level buy-in of stakeholders within the various departments. This was facilitated primarily by the work of the Deputy President in ensuring this consistent buy-in and support.<sup>47</sup>

## **8. Appetite for collaboration on a Basic Package of Support**

In the consultations, three departments emerged as potentially having the appetite to lead on a Basic Package of Support for South Africa's youth. Consultations with the National Commissioner for Youth – Ms. Tessa Dooms – pointed to the need to engage with the NYDA as a potential host and institutional home of the BPS. Her view was that the NYDA is looking to reframe its offerings and that it currently has access to the budget to deliver on the BPS. She did note concerns with the ability of the NYDA to implement, given historical controversies, but noted that if the BPS is led by or involves young people in its design at the programme level, a level of accountability to youth can be built into the model. This institutional location does make the most sense, given the policy mandate of the NYDA, its budget, and its reporting lines; but there remain concerns over capacity to deliver and to galvanise other departments to collaborate.

The DSD also expressed appetite to partner on the BPS although their view was that, since it required inter-governmental collaboration, a directive from the Presidency, or housing it within the Presidency (therefore probably within the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities or the Youth Desk at DPME), would work best since this would ensure departmental buy-in. They noted that under President Cyril Rhamaposa there is a drive for inter-departmental collaboration and that this could be leveraged to ensure that the BPS finds traction at the policy level. They were nevertheless very interested in playing a central role given the work they have been doing to try and ensure that CSG beneficiaries are better supported once they exit the grant.

The DEL expressed interest in the mandate to deliver on the BPS. They felt that they were already delivering on many of the services outlined in the BPS and have the infrastructure to do so. Further, the DEL has researched models of how departments of labour in other countries across the globe provide support to youth to reconnect to training and education. They particularly noted the German model, which had a one-stop shop for youth to reconnect to opportunities. In Germany, the programme was led by their labour department. In this regard, the DEL is considering how to possibly leverage UIF funds to provide such support. They also suggested that there was potential to engage with clusters in government. For instance, the Employment and Infrastructure cluster is working with the DWYPD and could take some of this thinking forward.

It seems, therefore, that locating the BPS at the Presidency level – either directly within the Presidency or within one of the relevant ministries in the Presidency – is what emerges as the most practical way to bring together an inter-departmental team committed to delivering the BPS. However, previous concerns about how these ministries have managed to forge inter-departmental collaborations and successfully implement initiatives, as well as hold departments to account, need to be taken into consideration. With this in mind, we now turn to the proposed institutional arrangements for the BPS, which stem from the review and consultation findings discussed above.

## **9. Proposed institutional arrangements for the BPS**

This report has provided an overview of the multifaceted challenges that youth who are NEET face. It has presented the proposed BPS policy approach and programmatic intervention. It has then provided an overview of the policy environment, policy mandates to serve youth, existing state programmes and services, examples of collaborative approaches to policy, and appetite to participate in a BPS. These findings informed our thinking on the most appropriate institutional arrangements to support the integrated delivery of a BPS and ensure that the BPS finds traction at national, provincial and district/local level over time.

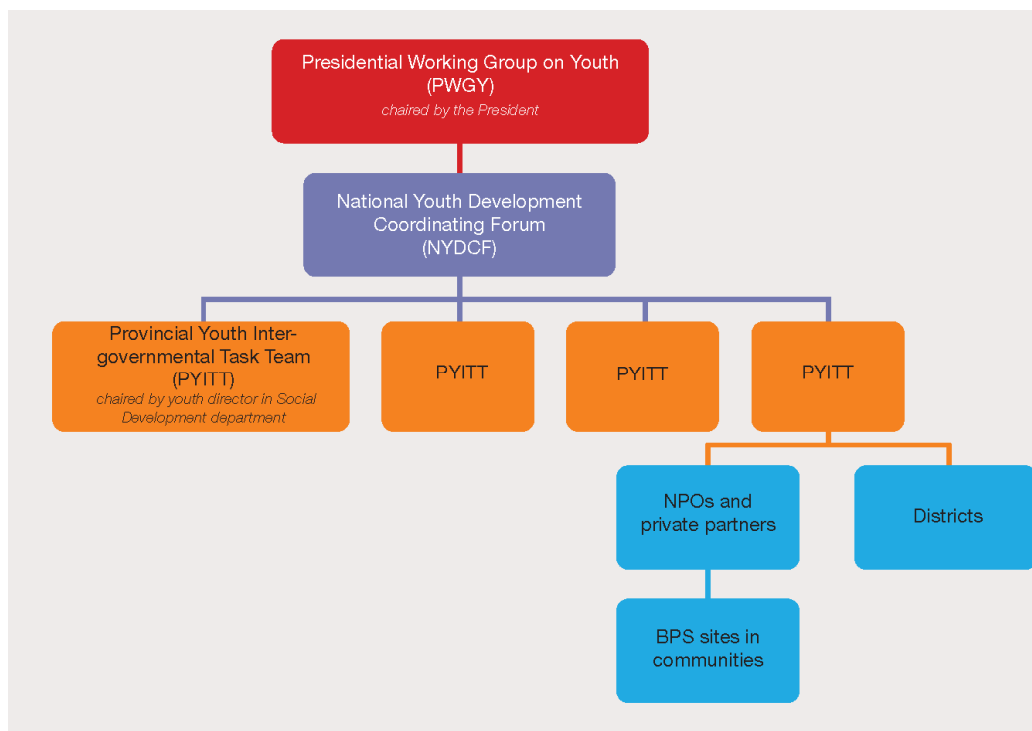
The proposed Basic Package of Support for young people who are NEET in South Africa aims to ensure that such youth gain a sense of possibility and are supported in their agency to take up pathways that lead towards that possibility; and that they show increased well-being, navigational capacities and employability. The delivery of the BPS needs to connect with young people at the local level through a programmatic intervention. A core component of the programmatic intervention is that it connects young people to available services and opportunities in their local area, including state-run services. As such, for the programmatic intervention to a) work effectively and; b) ultimately be scaled up, there is a need for buy-in and commitment at the national, provincial, district and local levels.

The purpose of this section is to inform the coordination of state services and mandates as well as reflect on possibilities for taking a BPS programme to scale through public–private mechanisms (as one possibility for scaling the intervention).

The findings above demonstrate that the South African policy environment tries to address concerns over the large proportions of the youth population who are NEET. However, there is little nuanced understanding of the situation of NEET youth in the country, of the heterogeneity of the group, the transitions in and out of the NEET state, and the precise nature of the interventions required to meet

the diverse needs of these young people. There is therefore a need for an institutional framework that can galvanise buy-in from the range of departments responsible for different aspects of service delivery, and which can coordinate services and hold departments accountable. We propose institutional model, depicted in Figure 4, to meet this need. This institutional model is intended to guide the provincial, district and local implementation of the BPS, based on contextual constraints, opportunities and resources, with support from national government departments.

**Figure 3: Proposed institutional model for the delivery of BPS at national, provincial and local levels**



### 9.1. Integrated service delivery: A partnership approach

The Youth Employment Accord (2013) recognises the need for “a central coordinating mechanism to bring together the various government youth programmes”. The National Youth Policy 2015 – 2020 (and updated 2021 – 2026 version) is meant to provide an overarching policy framework for youth-related work across various government departments. It calls for a holistic and integrated government approach that would be responsive to the needs of a diverse youth cohort, as does the National Development Plan. Further, it is clear from the discussions above that there are several departments that have core responsibilities for service delivery to young people, and others that already deliver programmes that young people might connect to.

For these reasons it is clear that an integrated/inter-departmental approach is required. We outline suggestions for how such a partnership approach could be achieved, including suggested leadership and coordination functions. It includes a proposed allocation of responsibilities across some of key departments responsible for youth development, within the broader framework. However, these need to be finalised in further consultation with the different departments and the Presidency.

### 9.1.1. Leadership and coordination

In the 2019 SONA, the Presidency announced that it will drive and coordinate a comprehensive plan to create two million new jobs for young people over the next decade (2020 – 2030), working across government departments and all three tiers of government and in partnership with the private sector. In a separate announcement, the Presidency has put forward a new district-based coordination model that is meant to improve the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of government programmes. The new, integrated model is designed to address the “pattern of operating in silos” in the three spheres of government. The aims of these approaches align with that of an integrated BPS service delivery. A BPS would thus support these policy imperatives with a particular focus on NEET youth, and ensuring its proposed interventions would be designed and implemented via an integrated government partnership approach. The BPS team therefore proposes that a national roll-out of the BPS (after allowing for a sufficiently long and thorough pilot stage) would be driven and coordinated by the Presidency, alongside other priority interventions for youth.

The realisation of the goals and objectives of the BPS requires strong leadership, technical knowledge and commitment from the relevant departments at all levels of government responsible for delivery of the services, including to: assess area-level needs of NEETs; assess the existence of and, where absent, plan the provisioning of BPS services to meet the identified needs; develop and implement quality service standards and systems; develop and implement feedback loops; monitor and provide support for on-going quality improvement; and evaluate and report on progress.

The BPS programmatic interventions would be developed and implemented through consultation with all the relevant stakeholders. The BPS services do not fall neatly into any one government department, sphere of government or sector as the needs of NEETs span across the mandates of health, education, labour, economic development, social development and public works at national, provincial and local levels. The successful implementation of a BPS for youth therefore requires an integrated, cross-sectoral approach and plan across government departments, and with civil society organisations and the private sector.

The BPS team therefore proposes that coordination at a national level would occur through a Presidential Working Group on Youth (PWGY), and that this group be chaired by the President and the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, and includes ministerial representatives from the social and economic clusters, and other major private or non-profit stakeholders. Regular quarterly meetings are necessary to ensure that the collaboration required for the implementation of the key youth policy priorities, including the BPS, is achieved across all departments and roleplayers. The success of the BPS is premised on the critical role of various government departments and agencies in supporting and streamlining the successful implementation of interventions at national, provincial and local levels.

At the administrative level, the team proposes that a National Youth Development Coordinating Forum (NYDC) would be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and overseeing the implementation of a BPS roll-out at national, provincial and local levels. The NYDC would be made of public officials from the various relevant government departments (see below), and key private and non-profit role players. More specifically, the objectives of this NYDC would be:

- To strengthen departmental leadership, management and accountability in all spheres of government (national, provincial and local) to ensure the fulfilment of the roles, responsibilities

- and delivery of BPS services for which the relevant departments are responsible; and
- To establish a coordinated national management and oversight system and to facilitate multi-sectoral coordination, planning and accountability to the BPS vision.

It is further proposed that this NYDC would take responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the following activities, to be facilitated through a public–private partnership, creating a community of practice that stretches across departments and across various levels of governance:

- Finalise the BPS policy framework and agree on the governance and implementation approach.
- Support the Provincial Task Teams (see below).
- Produce promotional/communications material to disseminate information and intervention results.
- Address issues that arise from the Provincial Task Teams.
- Develop an evaluation framework for implementation at local, provincial and national levels.
- Review and evaluate the work of the Provincial Task Teams.
- Make recommendations to ensure effective ongoing delivery of the BPS.

Finally, it is proposed that Provincial Youth Intergovernmental Task Teams (PYITT) are convened to manage, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the BPS at provincial, district and local levels. The task teams would comprise of the relevant implementing government departments and organisational partners. They would be chaired and led by a Director of a department mandated to deliver on addressing the multi-faceted needs of young people (section 4 above suggests that these include the NYDA, DSD and the MWYPD but further consultation to determine the lead organisation is required). Their functions would include the following:

- Ensure management of the project to deliver the BPS involving initial assessment, guidance counselling and planning, connection to relevant education and training and work opportunities, connection to additional social and health services as required, and loop back upon completion of pathway, as necessary.
- Increase the capacity of the service providers and of employers to continue to work in an integrated and coordinated way.

Local municipalities also have responsibility for providing leadership, management and implementation capacity and structures to support the BPS. Local government has a mandate for provision of youth development services for social and economic benefits.

#### 9.1.2. District coordination

The new district-based coordination model aims to improve the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of government programmes. The initiative has identified 44 districts and eight metros around the country where service delivery and economic development, including job creation, will be facilitated.

President Cyril Ramaphosa officially launched the first pilot site at a Presidential *Imbizo* in OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province on 17 September 2019. The other pilot sites are eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and Waterberg District Municipality. The BPS elements should also link with the pilot sites to ensure the integrated service delivery model.

### 9.1.3. The importance of a Community of Practice

The effective design and delivery of the BPS programme will result from a series of mutually dependent partnerships of role players responsible for the well-being and development of young people in South Africa. This includes different government departments, non-government organisations, private entities and individuals. In fulfillment of its responsibilities, the government would need to partner with all relevant role players and ensure that all partnerships support the realisation of the BPS commitments. The institutional arrangements set out in this section proposes a common platform for the regulation of the necessary partnerships and relationships to ensure that government and non-government organisations (both for-profit and non-profit) support the realisation of the BPS.

The realisation of an integrated, transversal approach to the BPS requires that role players work together in the following ways:

- Network: exchange of information for mutual benefit;
- Coordinate: information exchange and activities to achieve a common purpose;
- Cooperate: share information and resources for mutual benefit and common purpose;
- Collaborate: network, coordinate and cooperate as well as improve the capacity of the other partner for mutual benefit and a common purpose; and
- Accountable: ensure accountability and cost-effective provision of services where financing and service delivery are provided by different role players.

#### *Government role players*

Many government departments within the three spheres of government bear responsibility for the specific services making up the BPS programme and services, and in particular the identified essential components thereof. The relevant departments and their respective responsibilities are briefly described hereunder. Many of the components of the BPS programme and services may be categorised as concurrent national and provincial competencies (in terms of Schedule 4 of South Africa's Constitution).

In broad terms, the responsibility for national planning and coordination; the development of national laws, policies and norms and standards; and the setting of high-level targets rests with the respective national departments, followed by provincial, district and municipal target setting. Responsibility for the delivery of services (such as health, social services and basic education) is devolved to the provinces. This includes responsibility for funding; delivery or contracting NGOs for delivery of services; registration and monitoring; and evaluation of compliance of services with norms and standards. National, provincial and local spheres of government must ensure that their respective organisational structure provides for sufficient human resources to implement their various responsibilities in relation to youth development services.

The various government departments with mandates to support the BPS for youth include:

- **Department of Higher Education and Training:** NSDS III gives the DHET a clear mandate to ensure all school leavers are guaranteed training and/or work opportunities and is the only policy to actually identify a budget for such activities (albeit a discretionary one). DHET is responsible for coordination of the education and training sub-systems of post-school education, including universities, TVET, SETAs, community colleges, and adult and community education and

training. It is also responsible for oversight of quality and accreditation of training through the relevant SETAs and qualifications councils.

- **Department of Social Development:** Provides social grants for children and people with disabilities. It also oversees welfare services offered through NPOs. Lastly, it is responsible for the oversight of social service professionals such as SWs, SAWs, and CYCWs, many of whom are likely to be integral to the delivery of a BPS.
- **Department of Employment and Labour:** Provides public employment services and career counselling to youth amongst other work seekers.
- **South African Social Security Agency (SASSA):** Provides social assistance (grants) to all eligible children and their caregivers.
- **Department of Basic Education:** Provides support to all children and young people who are still in school but at risk, and to those of compulsory school going-age who might drop out before completing matric.
- **Department of Small Business Development:** Provides programming and financing to support young entrepreneurs.
- **Department of Public Works:** Provides public employment programmes with specific youth targets.
- **Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs:** Responsible for synergising the Expanded Public Works Programme and Community Work Programme.
- **Department of Home Affairs:** Responsible for birth registration, provision of identity documents and registrations of deaths.
- **Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation:** Ensures the continuous improvement in government service delivery to achieve national priority outcomes through performance monitoring and evaluation, and by supporting change and transformation through innovative and appropriate solutions and interventions.
- **National Youth Development Agency:** Plays a leading role in ensuring that all major stakeholders such as the government, private sector and civil society prioritise youth development and contribute towards identifying and implementing long-lasting solutions that address youth development challenges. Furthermore, the NYDA designs and implements programmes that are aimed at improving the lives of young people, as well as availing opportunities to youth.
- **Presidency:** Mandated to ensure the smooth functioning of government, as well as synergy between the three spheres of government. More specifically, it is mandated to ensure coherence in planning, coordination, policy development and implementation; performance monitoring and evaluation to promote a culture of accountability across the three spheres of government; and mobilising the nation towards a common vision. Within the Presidency, the MWYPD holds responsibility for coordinating and overseeing initiatives focused on youth.

#### *The role of non-government organisations and the private sector*

It is recommended that government adopts a partnership approach which ensures that the role of non-government service providers (for-profit and non-profit) is utilised to complement fulfillment of the BPS programme. Within a public–private partnership, government would retain responsibility for ensuring that all services provided and actions taken by NGOs and private sector partners comply with the limits, principles, obligations and responsibilities prescribed by law, policy and programmatic requirements.

Within the overall policy approach, government would also retain overall responsibility for the provision of BPS services. It can contract out delivery of a number of the relevant services and support roles to NGOs and other private entities under strict and clear conditions; however, it will remain responsible for the funding/co-funding, regulation, capacitation and oversight of contracted partners within the limits of the finalised policy framework. This relationship will be underpinned by explicit expectations, secure contracting and performance requirements, quality control, and bilateral accountability mechanisms.

## **10. Conclusion**

The policy assessment has revealed that there is a very clear focus on addressing the needs of young people across a range of departments but that very few policies identify NEET youth specifically. Nevertheless, the scan does reveal that there are significant commitments to addressing the needs of young people across a range of different policies and departments. This means that any intervention to support young people who are NEET would fit within the policy approach of the country and there are a range of services and programmes available to connect young people to and to work in partnership with.

Further, many of the policies refer to the need for better linkages between these offerings, and relatedly, the need for collaboration between a range of stakeholders – both within government and between government, the private sector and civil society. There is thus appetite to collaborate and to figure out models for making an initiative like the BPS work at various government levels.

## Appendix A: List of policies reviewed

### Overarching Policies

- National Development Plan
- New Growth Path
- National Youth Policy (2015 – 2019)

### Policies in which Youth are Targeted Programme Beneficiaries

- Green Paper on National Youth Service
- National Youth Service Programme Implementation Framework (2012)
- Employment Tax Incentive Act (2013)
- Expanded Public Works Programme documentation, including:
  - Guidelines for implementation for labour-intensive infrastructure under EPWP
  - National Youth Service Exit Framework (2012)
  - Department of Public Works. (2018). *Department of Public Works 2017/18 Annual Report* (annual report) (p. 515). Tshwane, South Africa: Department of Public Works. Retrieved from [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201810/dpwannualreport2017-18.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201810/dpwannualreport2017-18.pdf)
  - Expanded Public Works Programme: Consolidated Programme Overview and Logical Framework. Retrieved from <http://www.epwp.gov.za/Downloads/logframe.doc>
- Community Works Programme documentation, including:
  - *The Community Works Programme: Building a Society that Works* (Working Paper No. 149). Geneva: International Labour Organisation. Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_policy/---invest/documents/publication/wcms\\_223866.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_policy/---invest/documents/publication/wcms_223866.pdf)
  - *Department of Cooperative Governance Annual Report 2017/2018*. Tshwane: Department of Cooperative Governance. Retrieved from: [http://www.cogta.gov.za/cgta\\_2016/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DCoG-Annual-Report-2017-18.pdf](http://www.cogta.gov.za/cgta_2016/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DCoG-Annual-Report-2017-18.pdf)
- National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC)
- National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) (1999)

### Post-School Education and Training Policies

- Further Education and Training Colleges Act 2006 and Amendment (2013)
- SAQA Act No. 55 of 1995
- Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998
- Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997
- National Skills Development Strategy (2018)

### Enterprise Development and Youth Entrepreneurship Policies

- Youth Enterprise Development Strategy (2013 – 2023)
- Small Enterprise Development Agency (annual reports reviewed)
- Small Enterprise Finance Agency (annual reports reviewed)
- Youth Employment Accord (2013)

### Social Development Policies

- Policy Framework for Social Security for youth, commissioned by the Directorate of Children and Family Benefits at the national Department of Social Development (2012)
- White Paper for Social Development (1997)
- Draft White Paper for Social Development (2019)
- Regulations pertaining to Child and Youth Care Workers (2014)
- Amended scope of practice for Social Work (2018)

### Basic Education Policies

- Children's Act No. 38 of 2005

- National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996
- South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996
- DBE Action Plan to 2019: Towards the realisation of Schooling 2030
- Basic Education Accord
- Policy on Learner Attendance (2010)
- Draft Policy on Rural Education (2018)
- National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement (2017)
- Regulations pertaining the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12
- Draft DBE School Co-Curricular and Enrichment Policy (2019)
- Schooling 2025, DBE (2009)
- Learner Performance Support Documentation focused on Curriculum and Assessment Support 2011 – 2017
- Learner Performance Support Documentation focused on Curriculum and Assessment Support (2013)
- Progression Policy (2013)

#### **Health Policies**

- Youth and Adolescent Health Policy (2017)
- Policy Guidelines for Child and Adolescent Mental Health
- Policy for Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services
- Policy Framework and Strategy for Ward Based Primary Healthcare Outreach Teams

## **Appendix B: List of policy consultation participants**

### **Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology**

- Dr. Hersheela Narsee – Acting Deputy Director-General (Planning, Policy & Strategy)
- Ms. Aruna Singh – Chief Director (Programmes and Qualifications)
- Mr. Zukile Mvalo – Deputy Director-General (Skills Development)
- Mr. Trevor Tjale – Sector Liaison Manager
- Ms. Gloria Maaka-Tlokana – Director (Development Support)
- Mr. David Diale – Chief Director (Community Education and Training)
- Mr. Richard Mediroe – Acting Director (Student Development and Support)
- Mr. Letshego Mokeki – Director (Career Development Services)
- Ms. Sakhumzi Njili – Deputy Director
- Ms. Blondie Chabani – Programme Manager (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting)
- Ms. Fundiswa Sotenjwa – Acting Director (Student Support and Sector Liaison)

### **Department of Employment and Labour**

- Mr. Sam Morotoba – Deputy Director General (Public Employment Services)
- Mr. Noel Sicwebu – Director (Public Employment Services: Administration)
- Ms. Esther Tloane – Chief Director (Public Employment Services: Employer Services)
- Mr. Sagren Govender – Chief Director (Public Employment Services: Work seekers Services)
- Ms. Ursula Mkansi

### **Department of Social Development**

- Ms. Desiree Jason – Director (Policy and Programme Evaluation)
- Dr Maureen Mogotsi – Director (Children and Family Benefits)
- Mr. Klaas Baloyi – Deputy Director (Social Security Branch)

### **Department of Public Works**

- Ms. Carmen-Joy Abrahams – Chief Director (EPWP Partnership Support, Expanded Public Works Programme)

### **Department of Economic Development**

- Ms. Laila Ncwana – Deputy Director (Implementation of Strategic Frameworks)

### **National Planning Commission**

- Prof. Vivienne Taylor
- Ms. Tessa Dooms

### **Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities**

- Dr Bernice Hlagala through involvement in the review committee for the development of the National Youth Policy 2020

### **Presidency 5X5 committee**

- Ms. Nicola Galombik
- Ms. Carmel Marock

### **Education for Employment**

- Ms. Natalie Vereen - Convener (Education for Employment)

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## About this working paper

This working paper is one in a series of reports and working papers by the project “Towards a Basic Package of Support for Young People who are not Employed, in Education or Training (NEET) in South Africa”. The BPS project, which commenced in November 2018 and runs until March 2020, explores the feasibility and design of a South African intervention to provide more comprehensive support to young people, aged 15 – 24 years, who are NEET.

Based on research and consultations, the project has put forward a detailed proposal for a programmatic intervention that can provide well-targeted, individualised and long-term support to young people in South Africa, while building a local community of practice to support both young people and the services and opportunities that exist for them. The proposal carefully sets out the various building blocks of such an intervention, founded in a review of best practices. It concludes with a proposal for a pilot that can be implemented at the local level across different South African municipalities. It also proposes an approach to develop an overarching, national institutional framework that can both ensure sufficient resource allocation and safeguard the quality, integrity and coherence of the intervention when rolled out at scale.

The project builds on earlier work, led by the Poverty & Inequality Initiative and the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU), both at the University of Cape Town, in partnership with a coalition of partners in government, academia and civil society, to conceptualise a more comprehensive approach to support South Africa’s youth.

The 2018 – 2020 phase is led by SALDRU and conducted in partnership with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) Africa; the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA), University of Johannesburg; DG Murray Trust; and The Jobs Fund. The work was funded and provided with technical support by the Capacity Building Programme for Employment Promotion (CBPEP), funded by the European Union and based in the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC) in the National Treasury.

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# SALDRU

Southern Africa Labour and  
Development Research Unit

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The Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) conducts research directed at improving the well-being of South Africa's poor. It was established in 1975. Over the next two decades the unit's research played a central role in documenting the human costs of apartheid. Key projects from this period included the Farm Labour Conference (1976), the Economics of Health Care Conference (1978), and the Second Carnegie Enquiry into Poverty and Development in South Africa (1983-86). At the urging of the African National Congress, from 1992-1994 SALDRU and the World Bank coordinated the Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD). This project provide baseline data for the implementation of post-apartheid socio-economic policies through South Africa's first non-racial national sample survey.

In the post-apartheid period, SALDRU has continued to gather data and conduct research directed at informing and assessing anti-poverty policy. In line with its historical contribution, SALDRU's researchers continue to conduct research detailing changing patterns of well-being in South Africa and assessing the impact of government policy on the poor. Current research work falls into the following research themes: post-apartheid poverty; employment and migration dynamics; family support structures in an era of rapid social change; public works and public infrastructure programmes, financial strategies of the poor; common property resources and the poor. Key survey projects include the Langeberg Integrated Family Survey (1999), the Khayelitsha/Mitchell's Plain Survey (2000), the ongoing Cape Area Panel Study (2001-) and the Financial Diaries Project.

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