



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Cape Agulhas Municipality

“To the youth of today, I also have a wish to make: be the scriptwriters of your destiny and feature yourselves as stars that showed the way towards a brighter future”

(Nelson Mandela)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction to youth development policy 3

2. Why do we need a youth policy?.....3

3. Vision6

4. Objectives6

5. Principles7

6. Key Policy Focus Areas.....7

7. Implementation9

Annex: Youth Pledge11

1. INTRODUCTION TO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This Youth Development Policy is a practical guiding framework through which the municipality will assist and enable young people to meet their own needs; participate in and strengthen the development of our spaces and places; and stimulate young people's creativity and critical sense. This is ultimately beneficial to the socio-economic development of Cape Agulhas.

Youth policies should provide a minimum package of opportunities and experiences to which young people should have access in order to:

- Increase the probability of them becoming successful and active citizens; and
- Facilitate their social and economic integration.

It is far more cost-effective and reasonable to invest in proactive rather than reactive youth policies, which should encourage in particular new development youth initiatives in the social, cultural and employment fields. While all young people inherently have the power to shape their own lives, they require good and enabling conditions to do so. Cape Agulhas Municipality recognizes this and strives to afford our young people equal opportunity to realize their full potential and contribute to the future socio-economic and political development of our treasured spaces and places.

The benefits associated with the demographic dividend (being an increase in economic growth due to a rising share of working-age people in a population), embodied in our youth cohort, is not certain nor automatic, but with dedicated application and targeted solutions through our local youth policies, we can position our young people optimally to take advantage of the opportunities they have in this 4th industrial (digital / data) revolution, and contribute to positive development and transformation.

In the main this policy therefore seeks to outline an approach for how our youth can be supported and equipped to become an asset for the development and prosperity of Cape Agulhas.

2. WHY DO WE NEED A YOUTH POLICY?

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) notes that in South Africa approximately 60% of the population are people below the age of 35, while young people between the ages of 15-35 (the official youth definition) constitute 37% of the country's population. The same percentage of young people (37%) are unemployed and ravaged by conditions of underdevelopment, poverty and crime.

Indeed, in Cape Agulhas, of a total population of roughly 35 000 inhabitants (estimated for 2019 based on Stats SA data), an estimated 11 000 make up the youth component between the ages of 15 – 35, equating to a sizeable 30% or so. There is a fairly even split in terms of gender ie. for every 100 males, there are roughly 100 females.

According to the Helen Suzman Foundationⁱ, the current youth cohort is:

- ❖ The best educated, healthiest sector of the population;
- ❖ By far the most tech savvy;
- ❖ Have high hopes and aspirations for their future, but little inspiration;
- ❖ Have the ability, numbers and energy to influence our economic trajectory, governance processes and civic life.

All of which should make them a powerful force in our society. However, the majority of our youth are uninspired, frustrated and then become disruptive (and sometimes destructive), as they feel 'misunderstood' and are portrayed as a 'problem' generation in society.

The risks are manifested in high youth unemployment, the increasing number of young people in casual and low paid work; high rates of youth pregnancy and HIV/AIDs infections; high drop-out rates from formal schooling and education; substance and alcohol abuse; crime and poverty.

The average school dropout rate in Cape Agulhas was recorded at 37.9% in 2012. A total of 27.1 per cent of students that enrolled in Grade 10 in 2014 dropped out of school by the time they reached Grade 12 in 2016. This is an increase from the 23.7 per cent in 2015. These high levels of drop-outs are influenced by a wide array of economic factors including unemployment, poverty, indigent households, high levels of households with no income or rely on less than R515 a month and teenage pregnancies.ⁱⁱ

While some classify this as a dangerous, ticking time bomb, it is in fact due to an enormous under-investment in our most valuable resource, and needs to be actively addressed through practical and deliberate youth policies and implementation plans.

"Even though policy and decision makers express concern about the future of young people, few actions have actually been taken to change the economic, political and social conditions that shape young people's lives. The failure of current policies and programmes to address important quality-of-life issues for youth remains a substantive barrier to their full development and the development of the country... to put it mildly, the state of youth development, policy and planning leaves much to be desired."ⁱⁱⁱ

Disadvantaged youth must be empowered through effective policies and programmes to overcome conditions that disadvantage them, and develop their social, cultural and entrepreneurial skills. In the same manner, marginalised youth and those that have fallen out of the educational, social and economic mainstream must be re-integrated through second-chance measures and other supportive actions; or have access to non-mainstream alternatives which they might be best suited for (such as arts, entertainment and crafts, or even technology related skills).

Ultimately, our youth development policy must enable young people to realise their full potential, to channel their resourcefulness and energy into meaningful social, cultural and economic progress and development.

WHY NOW?

We are today at the beginning of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In many industries and countries, the most in-demand occupations or specialties did not exist 10 or even five years ago, and the pace of change is set to accelerate. By one popular estimate, 65% of children entering primary school today will ultimately end up working in completely new job types that do not yet exist.

In such a rapidly evolving employment landscape, the ability to anticipate and prepare for future skills requirements, job content and the aggregate effect on employment is increasingly critical for businesses, governments and individuals in order to fully seize the opportunities presented by these trends—and to mitigate undesirable outcomes.^{iv}

“The challenge facing post-school education is to find ways to assist the vast majority of school-leavers who do not qualify for direct entry into higher education or employment to gain skills”^v, for the purpose of entrepreneurship and creating jobs. The NDP calls for the creation of an enabling environment for small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive by instilling the spirit of entrepreneurship in schools, lowering the cost of doing business in the economy and reducing barriers to entry in various value chains.

The current National Youth Policy 2015-2020 places employment creation at the centre of all youth development interventions, reasoning that, “increasing the skill levels of young people will increase their chances of being gainfully employed”.

A key question in this regard is whether we are creating and inspiring the necessary attitudes and skills for the jobs of the future. In the context of the 4th industrial revolution (data and digital age) many of the current jobs will vanish in the next decade or two, as mechanisation and digitalisation (to name just two) become increasingly applicable. Many of those jobs of the future, including those not even imagined yet, will be created by young people who grew up with technology, view things differently and are adept at seeing opportunities in adversity. Perhaps it is up to the youth to create the jobs of tomorrow and for us to give them the necessary institutional support, financing and incentives to re-imagine the future economic opportunities and industries in our towns and cities.

We therefore have a time-limited opportunity for human capital development. In particular, young people are becoming crucial for demographic and technological changes, notably the use and spread of new information and communication technologies. Young people are also ingenious in developing their competencies in the field of non-formal learning through sports, cultural activities, the information and communication networks and through mobility. ***These characteristics make young people the privileged key resource of today’s knowledge-based economy and information society.***

Young people are a major human resource for development, and can become key agents for social change, economic expansion and innovation. Their imagination, ideals, energy and vision are essential for the continuous progress and development of society.^{vi} This means seeing young people as a resource rather than as a problem.

Our key question is how do we use and harness the initiative, energy and expertise of our young people to realise and maximise Cape Agulhas' developmental potential.

Our opportunity

The central challenge is not only to provide for, and support our youth, but to enable and equip them to become leaders in providing solutions for themselves and others. Empowering a young mind is pivotal in inspiring entrepreneurs that can create jobs and cater for their fellow youth, and inculcate a culture of disruptive (in the positive sense) and active citizenry. Key is shifting the line of thought from a receiver mentality, to a producer mentality for instance how they can assist in alleviating the challenges and obstacles to become active contributors to their family and community.

The best time to develop the attitudes and skills of our youth is now. Young people are open to change, are flexible, technologically inclined, better educated, and more open to lifelong and life wide learning. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we provide access to non-formal learning platforms that add the needed versatility young people require, to maximise their potential. Non-formal learning is not only related to personal development, active citizenship and life management skills, but it include skills, which promote innovation, entrepreneurship and social integration. We must promote its recognition and build bridges to other types of learning.

Finally, the official youth definition is very broad, and for the purposes of responsiveness and action, somewhat unhelpful. Therefore, our strategies and plans must be much more targeted to the specific and different needs of high school teenagers (mainly 15-18 year olds), those transitioning from teenage to adult life (19-25), and those in the maturation phase of their youth (26-35). The support, skills and opportunities required by those groupings, and even within those groupings, will be quite different, so no one-size fits all approach should be taken. A targeted range of activities and opportunities for youth development should be our focus.

3. VISION

An inspired, vibrant and capable youth cohort that actively engages in social, entrepreneurial and cultural development initiatives for a brighter and more prosperous Cape Agulhas.

4. OBJECTIVES

The key **objectives** of our youth development policy are to empower young people as assets for development, and inspiring their confidence and capabilities so that they can contribute meaningfully to their own development and that of our broader society.

This policy emphasises the need for various youth development efforts and interventions that holistically respond to all aspects of the youth.

Our objectives aim to support the youth to:

- ✚ Build their capabilities, through skills development which will enable them to take charge of their own well-being and discover their potential;
- ✚ Create an enabling environment, which speaks to the required skills, which will prepare the youth for entrepreneurship and job creation;
- ✚ Enhance the opportunities for young people to participate in, broaden and where possible transform our local economy through entrepreneurship, innovation and procurement;
- ✚ Assist the youth to develop a sense of belonging and identity, to connect, and to influence the development of our spaces and places;
- ✚ Understand the long term effects of lifestyle choices, inspire them on the importance of health and well-being, and to provide them with the necessary social support; and
- ✚ Consolidate and integrate youth development into the mainstream of our municipal policies, programmes and budget.

The objectives will be achieved by addressing the needs of the youth, through promoting positive outcomes, creating opportunities and relationships; and providing the support necessary to develop all young people, particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream.

5. PRINCIPLES

These principles constitute the values that inform our approach to youth development, namely that :

- ✚ Policies, strategies and programmes for and with young people should focus on sharing information, creating opportunities and inspiring them as active directors in their own development.
- ✚ Young people should be involved in meaningful activities which benefit their communities, while developing their sense of connection to their surrounds and their abilities through learning and service.
- ✚ Young people should be considered as agents of change, not passive recipients of services and benefits. The shaping of young people as active and productive citizens is critical for reaping the rewards of the demographic dividend.

- ✚ Young people are social, belonging to family and community networks that are essential to their development. It is critical that these support systems are strengthened and interventions are intentionally youth-focused to address their needs effectively.
- ✚ Develop a sense of cohesion (cohort) among the youth, while acknowledging and celebrating diversity, and inculcate a sense of belonging by encouraging visible and active participation in different youth initiatives, projects and activities.

6. KEY POLICY FOCUS AREAS

Our youth development initiatives should encompass all aspects of a young person's life and respond to their physical, psychological, economic and social needs, ensuring that they gain the necessary knowledge, skills and experience required to ensure a smooth transition into adult life.

In the main, young people want to:

- ❖ **Belong** and have a sense of Identity within their communities;
- ❖ **Connect** and develop their skills and capabilities;
- ❖ Have access to **Opportunities** for learning, work and social interaction;
- ❖ Have the necessary social and institutional **Support**;
- ❖ **Influence** decision-making and shape their own futures

These are therefore our key focus areas and strategic pillars, because **our local youth policy and implementation plans must enable the conditions necessary for our young people's effective social, cultural and economic participation in our communities.**

The strategic pillars can be implemented to:

1. Create and take advantage of opportunities for young people to drive development initiatives and promote a culture of entrepreneurship through:
 - Skills training in data and digital learning capabilities, financial literacy and management, start a business program, commercial viability etc;
 - Fostering creative use of new technologies such as data and innovation labs / hubs;
 - Start-up funding and support for establishment for young entrepreneurs, access to municipal land for new initiatives etc;
 - Access to capital and micro-loans for start-ups through innovation grants and competitions.
 - Importance of collaboration, networks and partnerships in business;
 - Identify the provision or creation of an Artisan/entrepreneurship development facility/Hub

2. Support young people and organisations in the locality to access employment opportunities / programs through partnerships with local business and civil society. It is vital to have a strategy for young people who neither work nor study.
 - Traineeships, internships and apprenticeships among local business
 - Local companies should be engaged and incentivised to set clear commitments in opening the workplace for young people who require internships, apprenticeships and work-integrated learning opportunities;
 - Localising YES (youth empowerment service)
 - Implementing the YES programme in Cape Agulhas, establish a partnership between local business, colleges and the municipality
 - Incentivise business for utilizing the youth
 - Cape Agulhas Municipality can commit to internships and graduate programmes;
 - Review the process of registering cooperatives and youth enterprises to remove blockages and reduce red tape, including preferential procurement for youth enterprises.
3. Connect young people through encouraging:
 - Youth clubs in each town;
 - New social networks and platforms;
 - Online portals;
 - Inter-cultural exchanges and opportunities abroad with sister cities;
 - Mobile libraries in townships
4. Promote informal, lifelong learning and encourage young people to improve themselves through:
 - Recreational activities for youth such as cultural and sport activities,
 - Film making and Music; establishing a beat making Lab and Dance Studios
 - Negotiate for, promote and raise awareness on youth volunteering opportunities
 - Learning and exposure events with leaders/coaches in various sectors in and outside Cape Agulhas to inspire excellence
5. Create the conditions and opportunities that enable active participation of young people in decisions which concern them, through:
 - Establishing a local Youth Council, with sub-councils (youth clubs) in each of the five towns;
 - Encourage new forms of youth participation and organisation via online portals, etc;
 - Hosting an annual Youth Summit (in **March** to formulate and focus on implementation plan for the next financial year, being July – June)

6. IMPLEMENTATION

The benefits associated with the demographic dividend, are not certain nor automatic, but with dedicated application, and targeted solutions in our youth development approach we can inspire, support and position our young people optimally, to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the 4th industrial (digital /data) revolution, to become meaningful contributors to the social, cultural and economic development of Cape Agulhas.

This Policy has been adopted by the Council of Cape Agulhas Municipality, on **1 October 2019 (Resolution No: 162/2019)** and is given effect through:

1. A multi-year strategic plan which is aligned to the IDP), which sets out the vision, mission, strategic pillars or objectives, as well as the enablers for successful implementation; and
2. An annual implementation plan, detailing the activities, roles and responsibilities, timelines and success criteria for every 12-month period.

ANNEX: Youth Pledge (in acceptance of rights and responsibilities)

We, the young people of Cape Agulhas, are capable citizens who will not only demand services and support from government and society, but will positively contribute to the development and transformation of our spaces and places.

We will strive to better ourselves and achieve our potential; work hard and honestly; treat our fellow youth and community members with dignity and respect, and demonstrate our commitment to health and well-being.

We will contribute to the building of the social values and moral responsibility by:

- Taking the initiative to develop ourselves and those around us;
- Showing love, respect and care to others and saying no to racism, xenophobia and other intolerances;
- Participating in the social activities that promote the values and traditions of our proud African heritage;
- Protecting, maintaining and preserving our environmental resources, public properties, symbols, signs and institutions;
- Participating in decision-making processes, and sharing our ideas and needs through our local Youth Council.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Anele Mtwesi, *An overview of Youth Policy*, The Journal of the Helen Suzman Foundation, Issue 74, November 2014, pg 40.

ⁱⁱ 2017 Cape Agulhas Socio-Economic Profile, published by the Western Cape Provincial Government.

ⁱⁱⁱ Anele Mtwesi, *An overview of Youth Policy*, The Journal of the Helen Suzman Foundation, Issue 74, November 2014, pg 38.

^{iv} World Economic Forum's *The Future of Jobs Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, January 2016.

^v National Youth Policy 2020, pg 11.

^{vi} National Youth Policy 2015-2020, pg 2.