

“अपनी आवाज
अपना अधिकार ॥”

**ASSESSING
THE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF
MADHYA PRADESH
STATE YOUTH POLICY 2023
A STUDY BY SYNERGY SANSTHAN**



**Synergy
SANSTHAN**

A top-down view of many hands of various skin tones, each holding a single red rose petal. The hands are arranged in a circular pattern, creating a sense of unity and collective action. Some hands have jewelry like bangles and rings, and one has a henna design. The background is a plain white surface.

About Synergy Sansthan

Established in 2006, Synergy Sansthan is a youth-centric nonprofit organization rooted in the belief that Young People are not just beneficiaries but changemakers. Born out of the vision and commitment of a few passionate youth leaders from rural India, the organization has grown into a powerful movement advocating for a youth-led, gender-just and participatory development paradigm. From its humble beginnings, Synergy Sansthan has evolved into a promising force in youth empowerment in Madhya Pradesh, currently operating directly across 11 districts and extending its reach to 21 districts through strategic partnerships and collaborative networks. Over the past 19 years, the organization has touched the lives of over 3 lakh adolescents and youth from marginalized tribal, rural and semi-urban communities—nurturing leadership, strengthening agency and catalysing grassroots change. At the heart of Synergy's work is the empowerment of adolescents and young people, especially those from Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, religious minorities and people with different gender identities. Flagship initiatives such as HumRahi, Udaan Fellowship and Yuvalaya-Youth Resource Centre have consistently demonstrated that when rural and tribal youth are given the right platforms, they emerge as resilient leaders, social entrepreneurs and advocates for justice within their communities.

One of SYNERGY's most transformative contributions has been the incubation and mentoring of early-stage youth-led organizations, many of which now anchor impactful development efforts in some of the most underserved geographies of Madhya Pradesh. Driven by the conviction that systemic change cannot be achieved through project-based interventions alone, Synergy Sansthan has increasingly focused on building institutions, ecosystems and inclusive narratives. The organization works to create safe, enabling spaces where young people can organize, learn, express and lead, thereby gaining not just skills but the confidence to challenge structural inequities and break inter-generational cycles of marginalization. As part of its current strategic focus, Synergy is scaling proven models, promoting social innovation and entrepreneurship among youth and deepening cross-sectoral collaborations. The organization is also investing in policy advocacy, institutional partnerships and youth-led research to amplify grassroots voices in state and national platforms. Today, the organization is striving for youth-driven transformation in central India, building capacities, courage and conviction among a new generation of socially conscious leaders. Synergy Sansthan aims to co-create a resilient, gender-just, youth-centred development ecosystem—one that is recognized, resourced and respected at all levels.

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A STUDY BY SYNERGY SANSTHAN

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List of Acronyms

Figure No.	Title
AB-PMJAY	Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
ARYA	Attracting & Retaining Youth in Agriculture
ASAP	Additional Skill Acquisition Programme
ASHAs	Accredited Social Health Activists
BMI	Body Mass Index
BNV	Bharat Nirman Volunteers
CMEGP	Chief Minister's employment Guarantee Programme
CMYDS	Chief Minister's Youth Development Scheme
CMYIP	Chief Minister's Youth Internship Program
CMYPDP	Chief Minister's Youth Development Program
CONYP	Committee for National Youth Programmes
CPGRAMS	Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSOs	Community Service Organisations
DIGI- SEVAK	Digital India Volunteer
ECSP	Early Childhood Sensitization Programme
GDI	Gender Development Index
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GOI	Government of India
HDI	Human Development Index
HWCs	Health and Wellness Centers
I.A.C.D.P	Intensive Arts and Culture Development Programme
IBEF	India Brand Equity Foundation
IDI	In-depth Interviews
IEDSS	Inclusive Education for the Disabled at the Secondary Stage
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILOSTAT	International Labour Organization Statistics
ISYDP	Intensive Sports and Youth Development Programme
ITIs	Industrial Training Institutes
KASE	Kerala Academy for Skills Excellence
KIRTI	Khelo India Rising Talent Identification
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoSJE	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
MoSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
MOTHER	Meghalaya's Outcome based Transformation in Health, Education, nutrition and Rural Development

Figure No.	Title
MOYAS	The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
MPVP	Madhya Pradesh State Volunteer Program
MSME	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MSY	Mukhyamantri Swavalamban Yojana
MYAS	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
MYCA	Maharashtra Youth For Climate Action
NCC	National Cadet Corps
NCS	National Career Service
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NEP	National Education Policy
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NHM	National Health Mission
NMHS	National Mental Health Survey
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSQF	National Skills Qualifications Framework
NSS	National Sample Survey
NSS	National Service Scheme
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
NTMHP	National Tele Mental Health Programme
NYAC	National Youth Advisory Council
NYKS	Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan
NYP	National Youth Policy
PHCs	Primary Health Centers
PIB	Press Information Bureau
PMEGP	PM Employment Generation Programme
PMJKV	Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
PMMY	Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
PRIME	Promotion and Incubation of Market Driven Enterprises
PTAs	Parents and Parent-Teacher Associations
RBSK	Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram
RGNIYD	Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development
RKSK	Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises

Figure No.	Title
SmSA	Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSCs	Sector Skill Councils
SVYPS	Swami Vivekananda Yuva Protasahan Yojna
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
UDISE	Unified District Information System for Education
UGC	University Grants Commission
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VIOs	Volunteer Involving Organisations
VSHSE	Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education
VTIs	Vocational Training Institutes
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WCCB	Wildlife Crime Control Bureau
YCPI	Youth Civic Participation Index
YDI	Youth Development Index
YEI	Youth Education Index
YGDI	Youth Gender Development Index
YHI	Youth Health Index
YPPI	Youth Political Participation Index
YSII	Youth Social Inclusion Index
YWI	Youth Work Index

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study would not have been possible without the meaningful contributions and collective efforts of several individuals and institutions committed to strengthening youth development in Madhya Pradesh.

At the outset, we extend our deepest gratitude to the young people of Madhya Pradesh, whose voices, experiences and aspirations form the foundation of this research. We sincerely thank officials from various departments of Madhya Pradesh Government, particularly those engaged in youth, education, employment, sports and social development, for their time, openness and constructive engagement during in-depth interviews. Their perspectives on policy formulation, institutional processes and implementation challenges added critical depth to this assessment.

We are equally grateful to representatives from development partners, UN agencies and AIGGPA officials who shared valuable insights on national and global youth development frameworks, best practices and monitoring tools. Their inputs were instrumental in strengthening the comparative analysis and in shaping recommendations for effective policy implementation.

Our appreciation also extends to members of civil society organisations, youth networks and grassroots practitioners who contributed their practical experiences and reflections on working with diverse youth populations, including tribal youth and young women. Their contributions helped contextualise the policy within the realities of rural and marginalised communities.

We acknowledge with deep appreciation the dedicated efforts of the Synergy Sansthan team, especially colleagues working at the field level, who played a critical role in facilitating stakeholder interactions, coordinating data collection and sharing nuanced insights from their long-standing engagement with young people. Their grounded understanding of youth experiences and policy realities significantly strengthened this study.

We extend special thanks to The Analysis (TA), Bhopal, for providing invaluable support in primary data collection, analysis and drafting of the report. Their technical expertise and collaborative approach were instrumental in ensuring the rigour and clarity of the research. We gratefully acknowledge the support of Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, whose financial assistance enabled us to undertake this study.

Finally, we thank all individuals and institutions who contributed directly or indirectly to this study. We hope this report serves as a constructive and actionable resource for policymakers and stakeholders committed to ensuring that the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy 2023 effectively supports and empowers the state's young people.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Young people are at the heart of Madhya Pradesh's present and future. With nearly one-third of the state's population in the youth age group, the choices we make today through policy, investments and institutional action—will shape not only individual lives, but the social, economic and ecological trajectory of the state.

The Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy 2023 is an important step in recognising the aspirations, rights and potential of young people. However, the true strength of any policy lies not in its intent alone, but in how effectively it is understood, implemented and translated into meaningful opportunities on the ground. This study was undertaken with the belief that timely, evidence-based reflection can strengthen implementation and ensure that the policy reaches those it is meant to serve—especially young women, tribal youth and young people from rural and marginalised communities.

This report presents a comprehensive assessment of the implementation readiness of the MP State Youth Policy 2023, drawing from national and global frameworks, comparative analysis of other state youth policies and extensive consultations with government officials, civil society organisations, development partners and young people themselves. The findings highlight both the promise of the policy and the critical areas that need to be addressed.

At Synergy Sansthan, our work over the last two decades has been deeply rooted in walking alongside young people—listening to their stories, nurturing their leadership and supporting their journeys towards dignity, agency and resilience. This study reflects that ethos. It centres youth voices, acknowledges local realities and emphasises the importance of gender-sensitive, inclusive and context-responsive approaches to youth development.

We hope this report serves as a constructive roadmap for policymakers, administrators and practitioners. The recommendations outlined here are intended to support stronger coordination, informed decision-making and sustained investments in youth development. By learning from best practices, adopting robust monitoring tools such as a state-specific Youth Development Index and fostering collaboration across sectors, Madhya Pradesh has the opportunity to set a strong example for youth-centric governance in India.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all who contributed to this study—government officials, civil society partners, development agencies and the research teams whose commitment and insights made this work possible. Together, we can ensure that the MP State Youth Policy 2023 becomes a living framework that genuinely empowers the young people of Madhya Pradesh.

Vimal Jat
Chief Executive Officer
Synergy Sansthan

FOREWORD



Relative to the world, India is a very young nation. We have many people between the ages of 18 to 25, and this generation is looking to author a future that is better and brighter for them, but also for the nation. That said, young people today are facing unprecedented challenges; there is a precarity on the economic front, technological advances are leaving young people confused and increasing the gap between the skills young people have, and the ones they need, climate change has created enormous challenges for young people when it comes to livelihoods as well as their well-being. Changing social dynamics, shifting family structures, migration, and the stark differences between rural and urban India, are together creating a complex environment within which young people are coming of age. In such circumstances, it is extremely important to support young people in ways that accounts for their holistic (psycho-social) well-being.

It is laudable that the National Youth policy looks to do that. This policy that has been amended and updated in 2023 takes a broader view of what it means to set young people up for success. However, many efforts are required to take policies into the field, as many challenges exist on the ground. For this reason, this report by Synergy Sansthan serves an important purpose.

The report is a thorough and detailed analysis, not just of global benchmarks for the development of young people, but also where we are in India. Taking a data-backed approach, the report presents a comprehensive view of what is working, and where gaps lie. Furthermore, by looking at challenges specific to Madhya Pradesh's implementation of the State Youth Policy, 2023, the report is providing a granular, in-context snapshot which is useful for policy makers, practitioners and academics alike.

The good news is that many of the challenges identified, are addressable. First and foremost, building greater awareness of the National and State Youth Policy amongst key stakeholders at the state district and local level is required. Capitalizing the policy with funds is another important piece, which requires attention from the State and Union government. But outside of these two things, which are harder to control at the level of civil society organizations and nonprofits, there are many opportunities to energize the infrastructures that do exist for the purpose of supporting young people. The report tabulates many of them, and engaging these departments, and institutions regularly and intentionally is something that can be done immediately.

It is also important to note that while India is still a very young country, in 15 years, we will have many older adults. This is important in the context of youth development because many solutions that are often proposed for young people entail resources or new infrastructure while, intergenerational spaces and older adults are not looked at as a store of value. By creating spaces that build social bonds between multiple generations, we can protect young people from risk, whilst also addressing the well-being of older people.

Addressing mental health in youth is an urgent need today, because a lot of the mental health challenges that we are observing are in response to a cultural, social and technological environment that is in flux and hasn't been encountered before. In this regard, Synergy Sansthan's own work stands out. By working deeply and extensively with youth, and centering their voices, Synergy Sansthan is a store of knowledge, experience and success on the field.

It's my pleasure that they have abstracted a lot of their learnings and taken the initiative to produce a report that can serve as an important resource for nonprofits, CSOs, and all people interested in supporting young people across the board. I congratulate Synergy Sansthan on the launch of this report.

Natasha Joshi
Chief Strategy Officer
Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study aimed to assess the implementation status of the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy 2023, which was released by the then CM of MP Shivraj Singh Chouhan. The report discusses in detail the National Youth Policy 2021, National and Global Youth Development Indexes and also presents a detailed comparative account with the state youth policies of Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, and Jharkhand.

While focusing on MP State Youth Policy 2023, the report analyzes the policy's objectives, framework, and expected outcomes. The report presents in detail the youth development landscape in MP, challenges, and opportunities that the youth of the state face. It discusses in depth the formulation process adopted to draft the policy, the proposed monitoring framework, existing gaps, and challenges in implementing the policy. The analysis takes a special look at aspects like gender inclusion and focuses on tribal youth.

In the end, the report draws findings and conclusions based on the research carried out. It also provides actionable recommendations to ensure effective implementation of the policy and serves as a strategic roadmap for policymakers to improve youth development initiatives in MP.

The research uses a mixed-methods approach to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the MP State Youth Policy 2023. For primary data collection, in-depth interviews (IDIs) with officials from government departments, civil society organizations, regulatory bodies, international development agencies, and other stakeholders were conducted. Following primary data collection, an extensive desk review was conducted by the research team to analyze the MP State Youth Policy 2023. During desk review, Parliamentary reports, policy documents, legislative texts, budget documents, third-party assessment reports, books, and media articles were referred to and studied.

To begin with, a thorough review of the National Youth Policy 2021 was conducted, analyzing its key objectives across major themes, including education, employment, leadership, health, and social inclusion. The study then examined the Youth Development Index (YDI) at both the global and national levels, providing a benchmark for assessing youth development progress across different states in India and abroad. The report emphasizes the importance of leveraging the Youth Development Index (YDI) as a measurement tool for tracking the progress of youth-centric initiatives. The research proposes to design a state-specific YDI for Madhya Pradesh, focusing on local contexts and challenges facing youth. By developing a state-specific YDI, Madhya Pradesh can monitor and address the diverse needs of its young population.

The comparative evaluation of various state youth policies has further enhanced the significance of this research as it provides insights into challenges, policy framework, and key initiatives. These insights, when viewed as evidence, can help inform the implementation and improvement of MP State Youth Policy 2023.

The study identifies several critical challenges hindering the effective implementation of the MP State Youth Policy 2023. One such challenge has been the policy's

low visibility and awareness levels amongst different stakeholders largely due to its recent introduction in the year 2023. During IDIs, it was observed that many government departments and non-government bodies were not yet fully familiar with the objectives, framework, and key expected outcomes of the policy. The research also pointed to the need for enhanced coordination and stronger institutional engagement to support policy implementation. For example, although the MP Sports and Youth Department is the designated nodal agency, it is currently in the process of developing a comprehensive, implementation plan and exploring ways to coordinate with other line departments to ensure progress on the various thematic targets outlined in the policy document.

Another important area identified is the need for dedicated budgetary allocations, as the absence of earmarked funds may limit the direction and pace of achieving various policy targets. The study also highlights rural-urban disparities, with marginalized groups such as tribal communities and young women often facing challenges in accessing the full benefits of the policy. While the policy document recommends the establishment of a youth Advisory Board at both state and district levels to support effective implementation, the research suggests that planning for this initiative is still in progress. The report proposes several key recommendations to support the effective implementation of MP State Youth Policy 2023 and enhance its impact. Like launching comprehensive awareness campaigns. These campaigns can play a vital role in informing stakeholders and encouraging greater participation in grounding the policy in the coming years. The creation of institutional bodies at both the state and district levels would be helpful in overseeing policy execution and ensuring accountability. A dedicated youth budget supported by transparent monitoring mechanisms will help track the allocation and use of financial resources effectively. Gender-sensitive interventions are also important for improving access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for young women and marginalized groups. Moreover, the introduction of a robust monitoring tool - such as state-specific Youth Development Index can provide valuable evidence to refine the policy and its implementation across the state.

In conclusion, the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy 2023 holds immense potential to drive positive change in the lives of its young people. However, to fully accomplish its objectives, there is a need to strengthen implementation mechanisms, clear funding commitments and enhanced coordination among stakeholders. By learning from high-performing states such as Kerala and Maharashtra, adopting digital tools to track progress, and fostering an inclusive and collaborative approach, Madhya Pradesh can significantly enhance the policy's effectiveness.

In that direction, this report aims to serve as a comprehensive roadmap for policymakers, encouraging data-informed, gender-sensitive, and financially sustainable youth development strategies to ensure that the MP State Youth Policy 2023 successfully empowers and supports the young people of Madhya Pradesh.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Youth is widely recognized as a transformative force in shaping the future of societies across the globe. In India, young people, particularly those aged 15-29, constitute around 28% of the population, representing a dynamic demographic that plays a crucial role in driving national development. (Youth in India, 2022, National Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, New Delhi., 2022) Empowering youth through access to education, employment, health, and leadership opportunities is essential for fostering sustainable growth. As agents of creativity, innovation, and change, youth are key to addressing the challenges faced by communities, both locally and globally.

In Madhya Pradesh, the state's youth face distinct challenges that require focused attention. While the state's large youth population offers immense potential, many young people, especially in rural and tribal areas, continue to struggle with limited access to quality education, high unemployment rates, and gender-specific barriers to participation in economic and civic activities. Addressing these issues through targeted policies is crucial for enabling youth to become active contributors to the state's socio-economic progress.

The National Youth Policy 2021 (NYP 2021) aims to provide a framework for youth development across India, with a focus on enhancing education, employment, healthcare, and leadership opportunities. This report explores the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy 2023 (MPSYP) in the context of the broader objectives of the NYP 2021, examining areas of alignment, gaps, and the potential for translating these objectives into actionable strategies at the state level.

1.2 Overview

In light of the evolving role of youth in driving social change and the need for robust policies to support their development, Synergy Sansthan, a youth-led organization known for its work with rural and marginalized communities, has undertaken this research study to assess the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy-2023 (MPSYP). The study intended to critically examine the implementation status of the policy and its alignment with the National Youth Policy 2021 (NYP 2021). By analyzing both the progress and challenges of the MPSYP, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of youth development in the state.

This study was designed to assess key elements of youth development as outlined in the MPSYP and compare it with the broader goals of the NYP 2021. It also explored the effectiveness of current monitoring frameworks and the degree of implementation at both the state and district levels. By investigating the key action points of the policies, the study sought to highlight the gaps in the implementation of youth-centric initiatives and provide recommendations for improving the policy's impact.

Furthermore, the research focused on the Youth Development Index (Indian and Global) to benchmark the state's performance in youth development. By comparing Madhya Pradesh's youth development progress with other

states, the study aimed to uncover best practices and replicable solutions that can be adapted to address the state's unique challenges. The findings from this study will contribute to understand the effectiveness of the MPSYP and also provided actionable insights to improve youth engagement, empowerment and opportunities across the state.

1.3 Study Scope, Objectives, and Research Questions

The scope of this study was to assess the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy-2023 (MPSYP), its alignment with the National Youth Policy 2021 (NYP 2021) and the overall progress of youth development initiatives within the state. This study critically evaluated the implementation, gaps, challenges and successes of youth policies at both the state and national levels. The study also drew comparisons with policies in other states to identify best practices and potential improvements for Madhya Pradesh.

1.3.1 Study Objectives

1. To compare the National Youth Policy with state youth policies of Madhya Pradesh and five other states, assessing their progress, challenges and identifying replicable solutions for Madhya Pradesh.
2. To assess the implementation status of the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy-2023 (MPSYP), identifying gaps and challenges in policy execution.
3. To review the Youth Development Index (Indian/Global) and develop a status report on youth development in Madhya Pradesh.

1.3.2 Research Questions

To address these objectives, the study will focus on the following research questions, which will guide the analysis.

1. How many states have developed state level youth policies and their policy level alignment with National Youth Policy 2023 and to develop a comparative status report for all the selected states including Madhya Pradesh.
2. What are the key action points of national and state youth policies and what is the present status in selected states for implementation?
3. Is there any reporting framework to understand the progress made to achieve the goals as mentioned in national or state youth policies? What is the present mechanism followed at national or state level to understand progress?
4. Are there any challenges faced in implementation of national or state youth policy recommendations/ action points? How gender specific challenges have been identified and what solutions were proposed in national and state youth policies.
5. What are the activity road map/key indicators proposed under MPSYP to monitor the progress made in implementation of the policy?
6. Who are the monitoring bodies at State level, District level to monitor implementation of Youth policy?
7. What are the budgetary provisions and allocations made by MP state government to implement the policy. (understand government commitment for achieving youth policies implementation).

8. What are the key areas of improvements, recommendations and suggestions from youths' perspective to implement policy level changes in Madhya Pradesh?
9. How inclusive representative and comprehensive are the existing global and Indian Youth development Indexes, and what modifications can be proposed to improve their relevance and accuracy in reflecting youth realities?
10. How can the youth status report and fact sheet be revised using improved indicators drawn from the global and Youth Development Index.

By addressing the above research questions, the study contributed in providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Madhya Pradesh State Youth Policy and provide actionable recommendations for its enhancement.





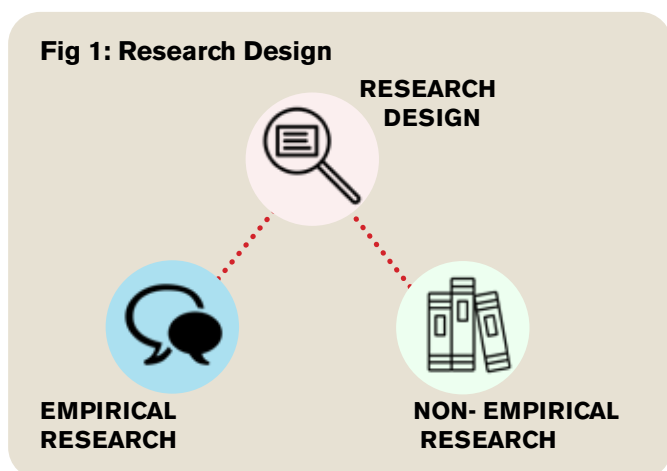
Photo : Amit Das

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study was designed using a mixed-methods approach, combining both empirical and non-empirical research to provide a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy 2023.



Empirical Research: In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted with officials from various government departments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and UN agencies that play a central role in the implementation of the youth policy. Key departments included Education, Health, Skill Development, Employment, Youth Affairs, Sports, and Women & Child Development. Additionally, interviews with CSOs and UN agencies provided valuable insights into the broader context and impact of the policy. The semi-structured interviews aimed to capture the officials' knowledge, experiences, and perspectives on the policy's implementation, focusing on the perceived challenges and opportunities in aligning departmental goals with the policy's objectives. IDI questionnaires were developed by the research team through consultations with key stakeholders and further refined in collaboration with the MEAL team. Each interview, lasting 30-45 minutes, provided detailed insights into the ground realities of youth policy implementation.

Non-Empirical Research: A thorough review of publicly available government documents was conducted, including legislative texts, policy frameworks, and third-party assessments. Detailed analyses of budget allocations, expenditures, and insights from both the global and Indian Youth Development Indices were included to contextualized validate findings from the primary data. Through a comparative framework, youth policies at both the national and state levels were analyzed, enabling a critical comparison of the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy with national benchmarks and international standards to identify challenges, gaps, and actionable recommendations.

2.2 Method and Sampling

Primary Interviews: To gather in-depth perspectives, we used purposive sampling to select key stakeholders directly involved in the youth policy's implementation. Semi-structured IDIs were conducted with officials from various government departments, such as Education, Health, Skill Development, Employment, Youth Affairs, Sports, and Women & Child Development, as well as

representatives from civil society organizations and UN agencies working on youth-related issues in Madhya Pradesh. The interviews were designed to explore each department's specific role in implementing the youth policy, departmental initiatives aligning with policy objectives, strategies for gender inclusion, and effectiveness of monitoring mechanisms. Consent was obtained from all participants, and interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy. The responses were transcribed and thematically coded to derive recurring insights and patterns.

State Selection for Comparative Analysis: The selection process included a review of youth policies from 15 states, evaluating data availability, policy timelines and performance on youth development indicators. (India Youth Development Index and Report 2017). The Indian Youth Development Index (YDI) of 2017 provides composite insight into the multidimensional progress of youth across the country. This composite index, developed with 19 indicators, measures the state of youth development across 20 major and 10 minor states of India, categorized based on population size by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). The YDI evaluates six key domains that are crucial for the holistic development of youth: Education, Health, Work, Political Participation, Civic Participation and Social inclusion. To conduct a comparative analysis of state youth policies, we documented youth policies from the 15 states and after careful evaluation, we selected five states based on specific parameters:

1. The availability of data
2. Their performance in the Youth Development Index (YDI)
3. Their geographical and socio-economic diversity
4. Region wise representation from across India
 - **Himachal Pradesh:** Ranked 1st in YDI, offering insights into best practices.
 - **Kerala:** Ranked highly in YDI, representing robust youth policy implementation.
 - **Meghalaya:** Highest ranking in YDI for female youth development, highlighting gender-focused initiatives.
 - **Jharkhand:** Ranked low in YDI, providing insights into implementation challenges.
 - **Maharashtra:** Ranked high (6th) in YDI, with strong initiatives in education, livelihood and participation

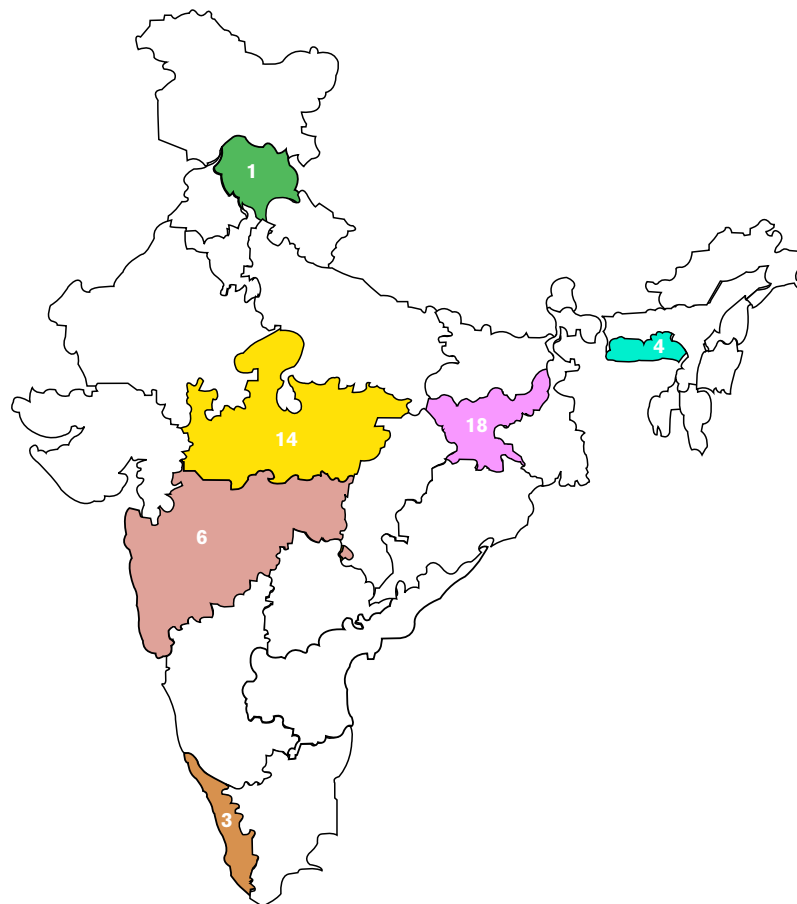
These states were chosen for their varied performances in youth development and also for their diverse socio-economic and geographical contexts, offering valuable insights into different policy approaches and challenges.

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection involved both primary and secondary sources to ensure a well-rounded analysis:

1. **Primary Data:** Semi-structured IDIs with officials from key departments in Madhya Pradesh yielded direct insights into policy implementation, capturing department-specific challenges, achievements, and best practices.

Fig 1.A: State Selection for Comparative Analysis



- 2. Secondary Data:** An extensive review of secondary data was conducted, covering:
- i. National and Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy documents
 - ii. Youth development indices at the global and national levels
 - iii. Budget allocation and expenditure reports
 - iv. Ministry of Youth Affairs publications, parliamentary records, and state-level action plans
 - v. External assessments and media articles

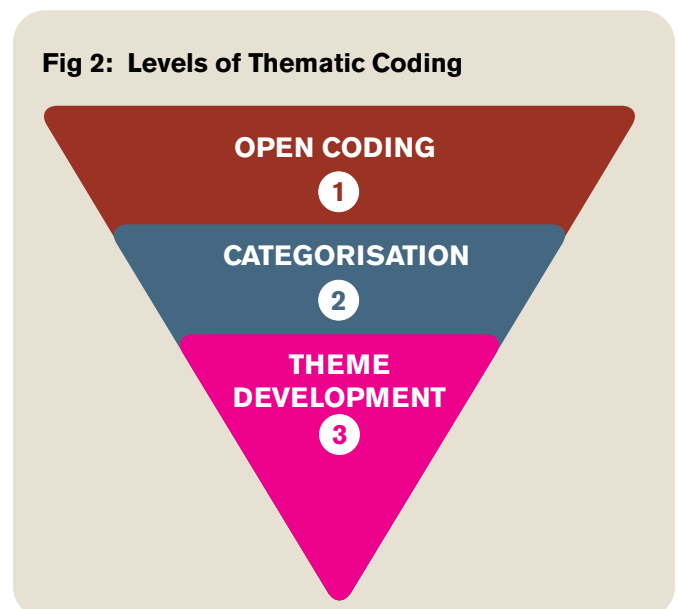
2.4 Data Analysis

Thematic coding was applied to the IDI transcripts, to organize insights into major themes and recurring patterns. Data analysis was conducted in three key stages.

- i. **Open Coding:** Initial coding of transcripts to identify key terms and concepts.
- ii. **Categorization:** Grouping similar codes to identify patterns and common insights.
- iii. **Theme Development:** Cross-analysis of all transcripts to extract recurring themes, shedding light on both the strengths and areas for improvement in the policy's implementation.

Secondary data analysis supported the findings from primary data, enriching the analysis of the current status, challenges, and outcomes associated with the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy implementation.

Fig 2: Levels of Thematic Coding



2.5 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research practices, with informed consent obtained from all interview participants. Participants were briefed on the study's purpose, their rights, and were assured confidentiality and anonymity. Audio recordings of interviews were securely stored and data integrity was maintained throughout the research process.

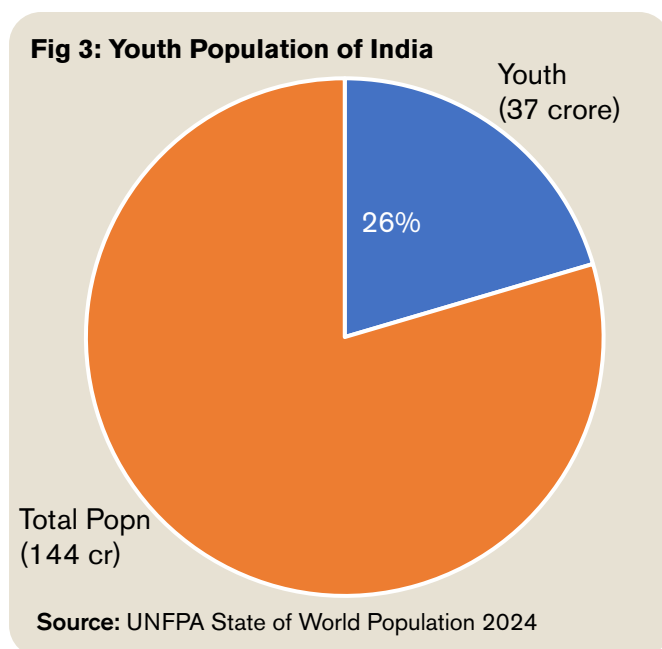


CHAPTER 3

Reviewing the existing policy frameworks on youth- Global, National and States

3.1.1 Introduction and Context

Youth represent the most dynamic segment of any society, embodying the aspirations, energy, and innovation that shape the future. In India, youth constitute a significant portion of the population, making them crucial stakeholders in the nation's progress. With over 37.14 Cr. Young people aged 15-29 years, India is not only one of the youngest nations globally but also a country where the growth potential is intrinsically linked to the development and empowerment of its youth. (DRAFT NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY, 2023) This demographic dividend brings with it challenges that need to be addressed through targeted policies and initiatives.



Recognizing the importance of youth as a distinct demographic, there was an urgent need to measure and assess their development comprehensively. Traditional indices like the Human Development Index (HDI) provided insights into overall national progress but failed to capture the specific challenges and opportunities faced by young people. (India Youth Development Report 2010, 2010) To address this, the Youth Development Index (YDI) was conceived. The YDI was designed to evaluate youth-specific development across various domains, focusing on areas such as health, education, employment, and civic participation. This aimed to offer policymakers a nuanced understanding of youth development and to guide the formulation of more effective youth policies.

3.1.2 Evolution of Youth Development Index

The Youth Development Index was first introduced in 2010, a significant milestone in India's approach to youth development. (India Youth Development Report 2010). Spearheaded by the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) in collaboration with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), the initiative provided a comprehensive framework for assessing the status of youth across the country. Established in 1993, RGNIYD has been at the forefront of youth development, with a mission to promote youth empowerment through research, education, and training. (India Youth

Development Report 2010). RGNIYD's involvement in creating the YDI underscores its commitment to advancing the status of youth in India and ensuring their voices are heard in national development discourse.

The need for a specific index for youth development was highlighted by India's performance on the global stage. India's journey in the Global Youth Development Index (YDI) has been marked by fluctuating rankings over the years. From holding the 98th position in 2013, (Youth Development Index Results Report, 2013) India's rank declined to 133rd among 181 countries in 2016, before improving to 122nd out of 181 countries in 2020. (Global Youth Development Report 2020, 2021) This ranking history reflects both progress and persistent challenges, showcasing significant strides in education while underscoring the need for greater attention to health and employment sectors.

3.1.3 Methodological Framework and Approach

3.1.3.1 Initial Framework (2010)

The first Youth Development Index, launched in 2010, was a groundbreaking effort to capture the multifaceted aspects of youth development in India. It focused on five key domains: Health, Education, Work, Amenities, and Participation. (India Youth Development Report 2010) These domains were identified through extensive consultations with youth and stakeholders across five regional workshops, ensuring that the index reflected real concerns and aspirations. The YDI 2010 aimed to assess and compare youth development across India's states and union territories. Its methodology involved rigorous data collection and analysis, with indicators sourced from the National Sample Survey (NSS) and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The selected Indicators were:

- i. **Health:** Institutional delivery percentage, life expectancy at age 15, percentage of non-anemic youth, and Body Mass Index (BMI).
- ii. **Education:** Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) at secondary and tertiary levels, and levels of education attained.
- iii. **Work:** Work participation rate and available workdays per year.
- iv. **Amenities:** Access to basic amenities like safe water, electricity, and toilets, as well as youth-specific amenities like access to information and communication technology.

Due to the lack of secondary data, the Participation domain was initially excluded from the primary YDI, which covered 29 states. However, for 10 selected states with available primary data, a second YDI incorporating the Participation domain was constructed. The 2010 YDI set a precedent in recognizing and measuring youth as a distinct and vital category in national development. (*India Youth Development Report 2010*)

3.1.3.2 Youth Development Index 2017

Building on the 2010 YDI, the index was revisited and updated in 2017. This iteration aimed to refine the index by incorporating new data and expanding the scope of analysis. The YDI 2017 not only updated the assessment

of youth development within India but also allowed for comparisons with global benchmarks. It continued the mission of its predecessor with an enhanced methodology designed to provide a more accurate and comprehensive picture of youth development in India. (*India Youth Development Index and Report 2017*).

The development of the India Youth Development Index (YDI) - 2017 employs a methodical approach to evaluate youth development across different states. This process is structured around four key steps: Indicator Selection, Normalization, Weighting, and Aggregation.

3.1.4 Key Findings and Analysis

The Indian Youth Development Index (YDI) of 2017 provides composite insight into the multidimensional progress of youth across the country. This composite index, developed with 19 indicators, measures the state of youth development across 20 major and 10 minor states of India, categorized based on population size by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). The YDI evaluates six key domains that are crucial for the holistic development of youth: education, health and well-being, employment, political participation, civic participation, and social inclusion. Through this framework, the YDI seeks to capture the current status of youth in India, offering a tool for policymakers to address the needs and potential of this demographic. (*India Youth Development Index and Report 2017*).

The YDI score ranges from 0 to 1, where 1 represents the highest level of youth development. States are categorized into four groups based on their YDI scores: “Very High” (0.671-1), “High” (0.607-0.671), “Medium” (0.494-0.607), and “Low” (0-0.494). (*India Youth Development Index and Report 2017*).

Fig 4: Categorization of States based on their YDI Scores

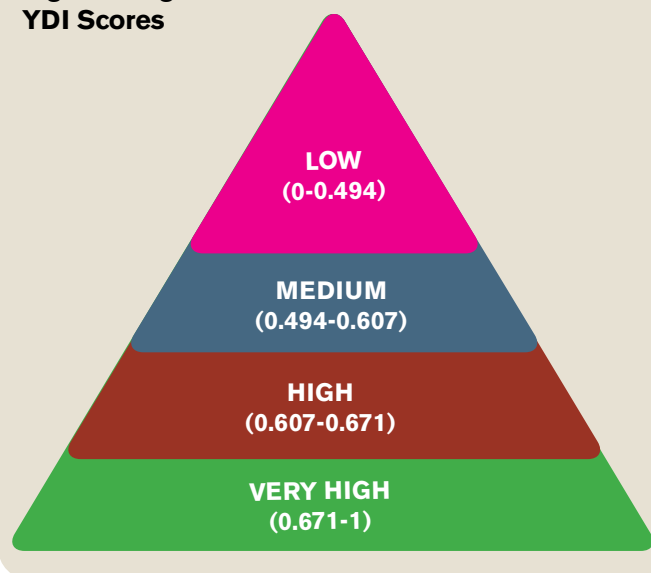


Table 1: Current Status of Youth in India and across the Indian States - 2017

INDEX	NATIONAL LEVEL SCORE	HIGH-PERFORMING MAJOR STATES	POOR PERFORMING MAJOR STATES	HIGH-PERFORMING MINOR STATES	POOR-PERFORMING MINOR STATES	POSITION OF MADHYA PRADESH IN THE INDEX
Youth Development Index (YDI)	0.569	Himachal Pradesh (0.689), Kerala (0.684), Tamil Nadu (0.680)	Bihar (0.466), Jharkhand (0.485), Rajasthan (0.500)	Puducherry (0.724), Goa (0.701), Sikkim (0.688)	Nagaland (0.300), Tripura (0.339), Manipur (0.431)	Rank: 14th Score: 0.557
Youth Gender Development Index (YGDI)	0.856	Punjab (1.034), Himachal Pradesh (1.024), Kerala (0.997)	Bihar (0.593), Jharkhand (0.720), Rajasthan (0.761)	Puducherry (1.042), Arunachal Pradesh (1.016), Meghalaya (1.009)	Nagaland (0.571), Tripura (0.590), Goa (0.628)	Rank: 10th Score: 0.904
Youth Education Index (YEI)	0.513	Kerala (0.735), Himachal Pradesh (0.716), Tamil Nadu (0.651)	Bihar (0.353), Jharkhand (0.396), Rajasthan (0.439)	Mizoram (0.752), Puducherry (0.724), Chandigarh (0.712)	Arunachal Pradesh (0.525), Meghalaya (0.590), Tripura (0.600)	Rank: 16th Score: 0.470

Table 1: Current Status of Youth in India and across the Indian States – 2017

INDEX	NATIONAL LEVEL SCORE	HIGH-PERFORMING MAJOR STATES	POOR PERFORMING MAJOR STATES	HIGH-PERFORMING MINOR STATES	POOR-PERFORMING MINOR STATES	POSITION OF MADHYA PRADESH IN THE INDEX
Youth Health Index (YHI)	0.632	Himachal Pradesh (0.778), Kerala (0.759), Uttarakhand (0.736)	West Bengal (0.503), Assam (0.533), Chhattisgarh (0.548)	Goa (0.809), Delhi (0.723), Puducherry (0.700)	Arunachal Pradesh (0.487), Sikkim (0.571), Tripura (0.579)	Rank: 12th Score: 0.638
Youth Work Index (YWI)	0.572	Gujarat (0.669), Maharashtra (0.630), Karnataka (0.629)	Assam (0.372), Kerala (0.403), Bihar (0.458)	Meghalaya (0.785), Puducherry (0.751), Goa (0.635)	Nagaland (0.211), Tripura (0.274), Manipur (0.471)	Rank: 8th Score: 0.593
Youth Political Participation Index (YPPI)	0.436	Rajasthan (0.585), Chhattisgarh (0.572), Jharkhand (0.565)	Kerala (0.226), Bihar (0.249), Himachal Pradesh (0.275)	Arunachal Pradesh (0.535), Delhi (0.480), Meghalaya (0.415)	Goa (0.253), Puducherry (0.272), Nagaland (0.303)	Rank: 9th Score: 0.407
Youth Civic Participation Index (YCPI)	0.191	Himachal Pradesh (0.495), Punjab (0.394), Uttarakhand (0.368)	West Bengal (0.108), Uttar Pradesh (0.110), Bihar (0.113)	Puducherry (0.392), Sikkim (0.351), Mizoram (0.342)	Delhi (0.155), Tripura (0.142), Meghalaya (0.163)	Rank: 9th Score: 0.2191
Youth Social Inclusion Index (YSII)	0.785	Assam (0.938), Himachal Pradesh (0.881), Kerala (0.879)	Bihar (0.687), Madhya Pradesh (0.720), Odisha (0.734)	Mizoram (0.959), Nagaland (0.953), Arunachal Pradesh (0.906)	Pondicherry (0.806), Sikkim (0.842), Manipur (0.863)	Rank: 19th Score: 0.720

1. Top-performing States:

- Himachal Pradesh stands out with a YDI score of 0.689, driven by a well-structured youth development strategy. The state excels particularly in education, health, and youth employment. It boasts one of the highest female workforce participation rates (59.6%).
- Goa (0.701) and Puducherry (0.724), minor states, also outperform many major states, showcasing effective local policies.

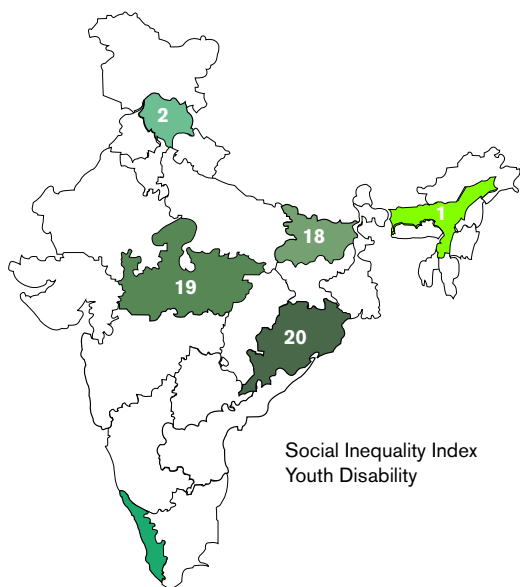
2. States Facing Developmental Challenges:

- Bihar ranks the lowest in the Youth Development Index with a score of 0.466. The state's challenges stem from significant gaps in education, health, and employment. Bihar faces a very low GER in higher education (17.1%) and a high dropout rate (20.5%). It also struggles with high youth unemployment and limited opportunities in the formal sector, resulting in one of the lowest youth development scores in the country.

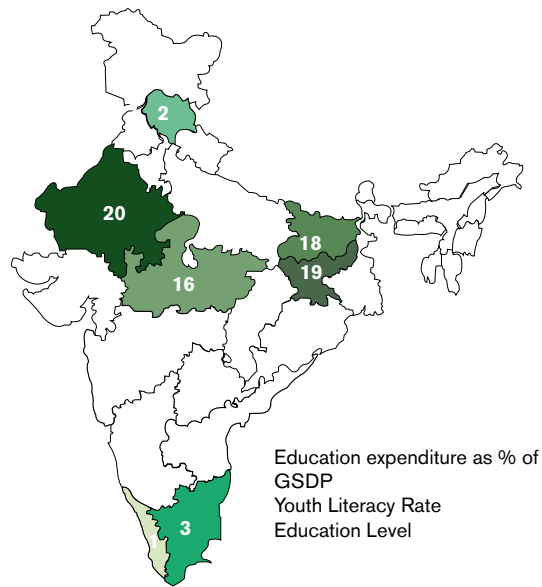
3.1.4.1 Youth Gender Development Index (YGDI):

- India's Youth Gender Development Index (YGDI) score of 0.856 reflects a 14.4% gap from gender parity, showcasing varied gender development performances across states.
- Punjab leads with a YGDI score of 1.034, showcasing a significant commitment to gender parity. The state's focus on increasing female enrollment across all education levels, including higher education (with a GER of 30.1% for girls compared to 25.2% for boys), has been a driving factor. The Mai Bhago Vidya Scheme, which provides free bicycles to girls in classes 9 to 12 in government schools, is a notable initiative aimed at encouraging school enrollment and reducing dropout rates among female students.
- Himachal Pradesh performs exceptionally well in gender development with a score of 1.024. This success can be attributed to its sustained efforts in female empowerment, particularly through economic policies

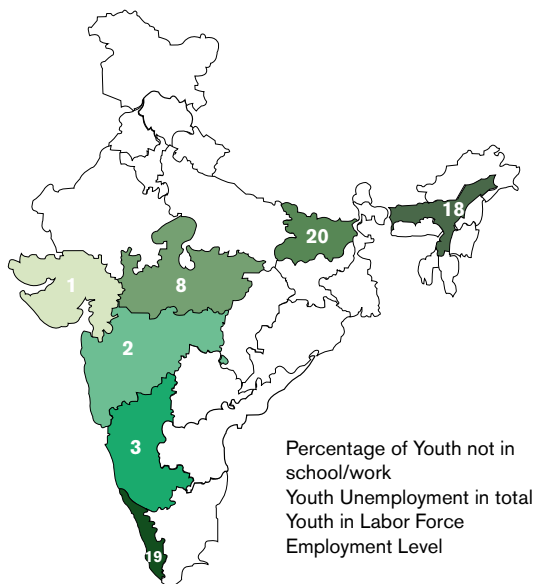
Fig 4.A Comparative Performance of Madhya Pradesh on Key Development Indices



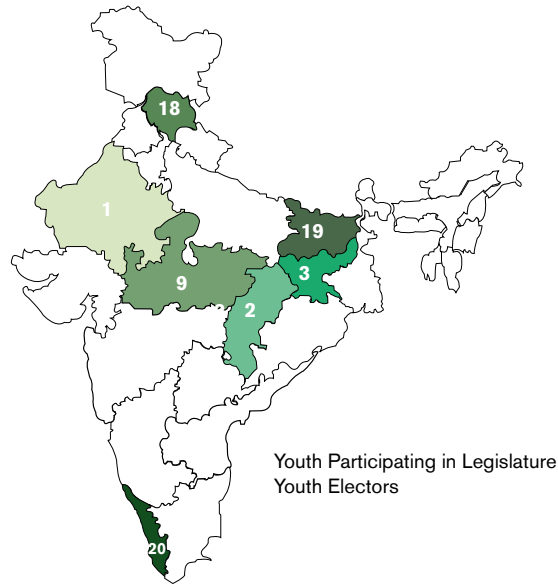
SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX



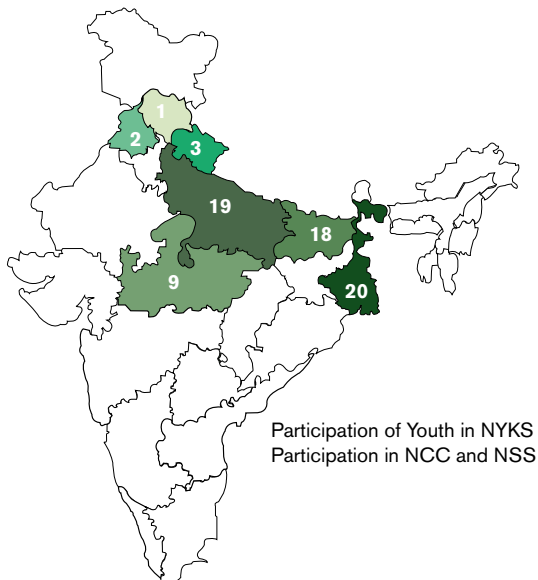
EDUCATION INDEX



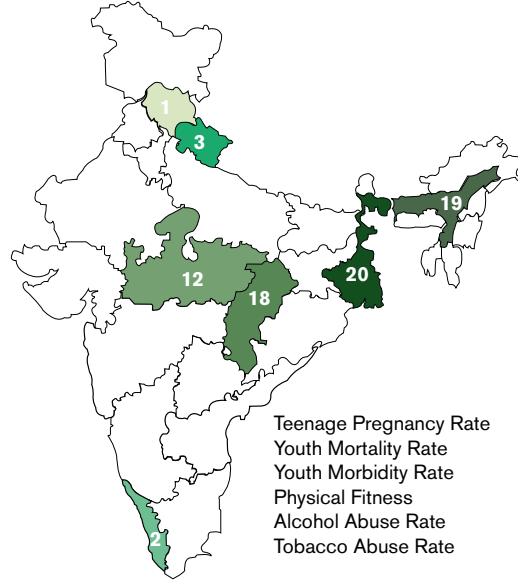
WORK PARTICIPATION INDEX



POLITICAL PARTICIPATION INDEX



CIVIC PARTICIPATION INDEX



HEALTH INDEX

- d. Bihar ranks the lowest with a score of 0.593, reflecting challenges such as a female literacy rate of 55.1%, a high unemployment ratio of 23.28% for women, and prevalent early marriages (40.8% of girls married before 18).
- e. Among minor states, Puducherry (1.142) and Arunachal Pradesh (1.097) lead with exceptional gender parity, while Nagaland (0.803), Tripura (0.821), and Goa (0.833) lag, indicating areas for targeted interventions.

3.1.4.2 Youth Education Index (YEI)

- a. Nationally, the Youth Education Index (YEI) score is 0.513, indicating moderate educational attainment among youth. However, significant disparities exist across states.
- b. Kerala leads with a Youth Education Index score of 0.735, underpinned by a robust education system. The state boasts high literacy rates (97.4% for women and 97.1% for men) and a high GER of 97.9% in secondary education. Kerala's focus on inclusive education, alongside its widespread public-school infrastructure, ensures access to quality education for all youth.
- c. Himachal Pradesh ranks second with a YEI score of 0.716. The state's strong education policies, including free education for girls and special scholarships, have resulted in a high GER of 94.1% in secondary schools. These initiatives have contributed to the state's high performance in youth education.
- d. Bihar lags behind with a low YEI score of 0.353, primarily due to its inadequate educational infrastructure. The state has a GER of just 17.1% in higher education and suffers from a high dropout rate of 20.5%. These challenges significantly contribute to Bihar's low rank in the Youth Education Index.
- e. Among minor states, Mizoram (0.752) and Puducherry (0.724) rank the highest, while Arunachal Pradesh (0.525) and Meghalaya (0.590) reflect the need for significant educational reforms.

3.1.4.3 Youth Health Index (YHI)

- a. The national Youth Health Index (YHI) score is 0.632, integrating indicators such as adolescent fertility rate, youth mortality and morbidity rates, physical fitness, substance abuse (alcohol and tobacco), anemia prevalence, and BMI-related obesity rates.
- b. Himachal Pradesh leads with a Youth Health Index score of 0.778, benefiting from low obesity rates (7.5% in males, 4.5% in females) and a significantly lower anemia prevalence (39.9%). These health indicators are supported by the state's strong healthcare infrastructure and successful youth health programs.
- c. Kerala follows closely with a YHI score of 0.759. The state's healthcare system excels with low teenage pregnancy rates and minimal youth mortality. However, rising obesity rates in both males (9.8%) and females (6.7%) pose emerging

challenges for youth health in Kerala.

- d. West Bengal, with a score of 0.503, reflects significant health challenges, including the highest youth anemia prevalence (68.4%) and the second-highest teenage pregnancy rate (16%). While obesity rates are lower (4.6% in males, 1.9% in females), these gains are offset by insufficient health infrastructure and high adolescent fertility.
- e. Among minor states, Goa (0.809) and Delhi (0.723) perform exceptionally well, leveraging urban health networks and targeted youth health programs. Conversely, Arunachal Pradesh (0.487) and Sikkim (0.571) face barriers to healthcare access and higher morbidity rates.

3.1.4.4 Youth Work Index (YWI):

- a. Nationally, the Youth Work Index (YWI) score is 0.572, reflecting a moderate level of youth employment across states, with significant differences based on factors such as Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Work-Pupil Ratio (WPR), and Unemployment Rate (UR).
- b. Gujarat leads with a YWI score of 0.669, driven by a high labor force participation rate (57.5%) and a work-pupil ratio of 55.8%. The state also benefits from a low unemployment rate of just 3.1%, providing ample employment opportunities for its youth.
- c. Maharashtra ranks second with a YWI score of 0.630. The state's strong economy and focus on job creation through various employment programs have contributed to a 31.3% regular wage employment rate. However, a higher unemployment rate (10.8%) still indicates the need for more inclusive youth employment policies.
- d. Assam ranks low with a YWI score of 0.372. The state faces challenges with a labor force participation rate of 51.9% and a work-pupil ratio of 44%, accompanied by a high unemployment rate of 14.1%. These indicators point to the need for more effective youth employment schemes and a more robust labor market.
- e. Among minor states, Meghalaya (0.785), Pondicherry (0.751), and Goa (0.635) show better employment conditions, while Nagaland (0.211), Tripura (0.274), and Manipur (0.471) face considerable challenges.

3.1.4.5 Youth Political Participation Index (YPPi):

- a. With a national YPPi score of 0.436, there is clear room for increased political involvement among young people.
- a. Rajasthan (0.585), Chhattisgarh (0.572), and Jharkhand (0.565) lead the way, indicating higher levels of youth political activity.
- a. Conversely, Kerala (0.226), Bihar (0.249), and Himachal Pradesh (0.275) lag behind, with notably lower youth political participation in southern states
- a. Among minor states, Arunachal Pradesh (0.535), Delhi (0.480), and Meghalaya (0.415) show relatively higher engagement, whereas Goa (0.253), Puducherry (0.272), and Nagaland (0.303) perform poorly.

3.1.4.6 Youth Civic Participation Index (YCPI)

- a. The national YCPI score is 0.191, indicating a low level of civic engagement among youth.
- b. Himachal Pradesh (0.495), Punjab (0.394), and Uttarakhand (0.368) stand out as leaders in civic participation, while West Bengal (0.108), Uttar Pradesh (0.110), and Bihar (0.113) score poorly.
- c. Among minor states, Pondicherry, Sikkim, and Mizoram exhibit stronger civic engagement, contrasting with Delhi, Tripura, and Meghalaya, which show lower levels of participation.

3.1.4.7 Youth Social Inclusion Index (YSII)

- a. With a national YSII score of 0.785, the index reflects a moderate level of social inclusivity.
- b. Assam (0.938), Himachal Pradesh (0.881), and Kerala (0.879) perform well, indicating effective social inclusion policies.
- c. In contrast, Bihar (0.687), Madhya Pradesh (0.720), and Odisha (0.734) demonstrate lower inclusivity levels.
- d. Among minor states, Mizoram (0.959), Nagaland (0.953), and Arunachal Pradesh (0.906) excel, while Pondicherry (0.806), Sikkim (0.842), and Manipur (0.863) lag behind.

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis provided by the Indian Youth Development Index and its associated indices highlights both the progress made and the ongoing challenges in youth development across India. While some states excel in various domains, others face significant obstacles that require focused interventions. The data serves as a crucial guide for policymakers to tailor strategies that address regional disparities and enhance the overall well-being and development of India's youth. By leveraging these insights, the country can better navigate the complexities of youth development and work towards creating a more equitable and prosperous future for its young population.

3.1.5 Contextualizing the YDI for Madhya Pradesh

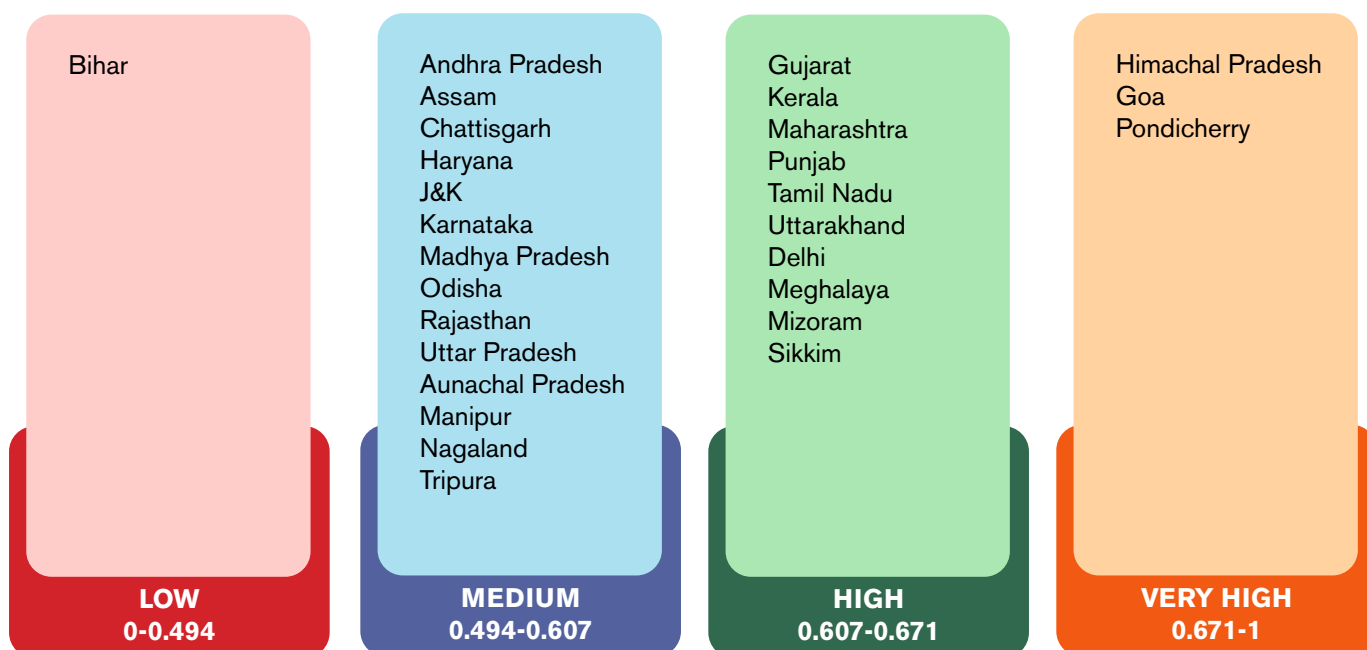
Since the last update of the Youth Development Index (YDI) in 2017, it has become increasingly important to evolve the index into a dynamic tool that reflects the changing realities and needs of India's youth. Transitioning from a static framework to a regularly updated and responsive model could provide timely insights and enable targeted interventions. This process could be effectively facilitated by NITI Ayog through annual updates, drawing on national and district level data sources. These updates can also incorporate emerging indicators such as mental health, digital literacy, environmental awareness, and sports participation, to address the multifaceted challenges faced by today's youth.

The creation of a digital YDI Dashboard will play an important role, in offering real-time data visualization and comparative insights across states and districts. This transparency can enhance accessibility and encourage informed policymaking. Automated data validation systems integrated with government databases would ensure consistency and reliability, while regular evaluations and reports could facilitate continuous assessment of policies and their impacts. Also, collaborating with state governments and civil society organizations would help address region-specific challenges and ensure robust data collection.

Madhya Pradesh, with its unique socio-economic diversity, stands to benefit significantly from designing a state-specific YDI that mirrors the national framework while addressing local challenges. Madhya Pradesh, in particular, would benefit from developing a localized version of the YDI that integrates district-level data and tracks indicators such as youth participation in agriculture, sports, and environmental conservation—areas crucial to the state's demographic and economic context.

In Health and Wellbeing, mental health needs to be prioritized, especially in light of the rising emotional and

Fig 5: Classification of Indian States based on their YDI scores



psychological challenges among youth, including social media addiction. With a high tribal population and rural demographic, equitable access to healthcare remains crucial for addressing these disparities and ensuring holistic development.

Sports and Physical Fitness is a critical area often overlooked in youth development metrics. Madhya Pradesh should focus on tracking access to sports infrastructure, participation in both traditional and modern sports, and performance at various levels. Identifying indigenous talent in rural areas and promoting traditional games can not only boost engagement but also strengthen cultural ties and community bonds.

In Environmental Awareness and Action, Madhya Pradesh's rich natural resources and significant tribal population present unique opportunities. Youth participation in conservation efforts, sustainable agricultural practices, and climate change awareness initiatives must be encouraged. Preserving and integrating tribal ecological knowledge will align environmental sustainability with cultural heritage, fostering a more inclusive approach to conservation.

Education and Skill Development must incorporate contemporary challenges and opportunities. Climate education, social leadership training, and programs aimed at building industry-ready skills, including digital and entrepreneurial competencies, are essential. A shift from purely academic focus to practical readiness will ensure youth are equipped to meet the demands of modern economies. Given Madhya Pradesh's agrarian economy, Employment and Entrepreneurship should emphasize promoting organic farming and rural entrepreneurship. Bridging traditional farming methods with modern sustainability practices can foster economic resilience. Special attention should be given to empowering women through digital and financial literacy programs, which can protect them from cyber frauds and enhance their participation in economic activities.

The state needs to address critical challenges in Social Justice and Inclusion, including the increasing rates of violence against women and children. Enhancing constitutional literacy, particularly in rural and tribal areas, can empower marginalized groups. Promoting active inclusion of tribal youth in governance and development initiatives will help create a more equitable society. Lastly, Tribal Youth Development should be at the core of Madhya Pradesh's youth agenda. Enhancing access to education, healthcare, and entrepreneurial opportunities in tribal regions, while preserving cultural heritage and fostering pride in indigenous identities, is crucial for sustainable development. By adopting this holistic approach, Madhya Pradesh can design a state-specific YDI that addresses its distinct challenges, fosters inclusivity, and empowers its youth to become drivers of sustainable growth and development.

This suggestive template provides a state-specific framework for assessing youth development in Madhya Pradesh, considering its socio-economic, cultural, and geographical diversity. It can guide the design and implementation of a robust YDI tailored to the state's unique needs.

1. Education and Skill Development

- a. Gross Enrollment Ratio (secondary/higher education)
- b. Dropout rates by gender and social category
- c. Climate education program participation
- d. Enrollment in social leadership programs
- e. Certifications in industry-relevant skills
- f. Traditional knowledge preservation in tribal areas
- g. Availability of career counseling services
- h. Women's digital and financial literacy rates
- i. Proximity and quality of educational infrastructure

2. Education and Skill Development

- a. Youth unemployment rates
- b. Rural entrepreneurship and innovation rates
- c. Tribal enterprise and traditional crafts employment
- d. Agri-business and organic farming adoption rates
- e. Participation in tech startups and gig economy engagement
- f. Women's workforce participation and inclusion
- g. Migration trends for employment opportunities

3. Health and Wellbeing

- a. Physical health metrics
- b. Access to mental health services and counseling
- c. Substance abuse prevalence and social media addiction rates
- d. Adolescent and reproductive health awareness
- e. Youth suicide rates and nutrition status
- f. Healthcare facility access, particularly in tribal and rural areas

4. Sports and Physical Fitness

- a. Availability of sports infrastructure
- b. Participation in indigenous sports and traditional games
- c. Rural talent identification programs
- d. Enrollment in sports training and fitness metrics
- e. Women and tribal representation in sports initiatives

5. Environmental Leadership

- a. Preservation of traditional ecological knowledge
- b. Youth participation in forest and water conservation
- c. Awareness of climate action and sustainable agriculture practices
- d. Engagement in biodiversity conservation and waste management initiatives

6. Social Justice and Inclusion

- a. Gender-based violence and child protection metrics
- b. Awareness of constitutional and legal rights
- c. Inclusion of SC/ST, LGBTQIA+, and persons with disabilities
- d. Child marriage and human trafficking prevention rates
- e. Representation of tribal youth in governance and development programs

7. Cultural Heritage and Innovation

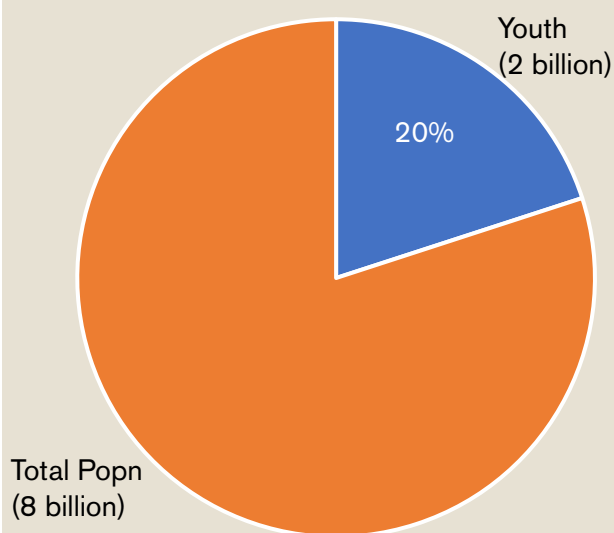
- a. Initiatives for preserving traditional art, languages, and cultural practices
- b. Engagement in cultural entrepreneurship and innovation hubs
- c. Intergenerational transfer of knowledge and documentation of heritage
- d. Access to art education and cultural tourism opportunities
- e. Digital preservation of cultural assets and participation in exchange programs

3.1.6 Global Youth Development Index Review

3.1.6.1 Current Global Youth Landscape

Youth, the vibrant force of our global population, represents not just the future but also the present. As of recent data, there are approximately 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 29, making up nearly a quarter of the world’s population. (The Global Picture, 2023) Their role in society is undeniably critical, from driving technological innovation to fostering cultural shifts and championing social change. However, the challenges they face are equally significant, ranging from unemployment and lack of education to mental health issues and social exclusion. The pressing need to measure, understand, and enhance the opportunities available to this vital demographic has never been more urgent. This need is what gave rise to the Youth Development Index (YDI), a tool designed to assess the status of young people across the globe.

Fig 6: Youth Population around the World



Source: UNFPA State of World Population 2024

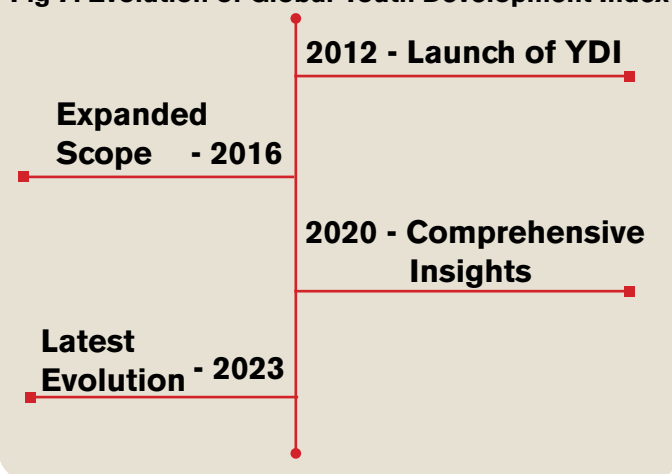
3.1.6.2 Evolution of Global YDI

First launched in 2012, the Youth Development Index (YDI) was designed to provide a comprehensive measure of youth development by evaluating a range of key indicators. Its purpose was twofold: to highlight disparities among nations and to encourage targeted interventions that support youth progress. The inaugural edition covered

170 countries across five domains—Education, Health and Wellbeing, Employment and Opportunity, Civic Participation, and Political Participation—establishing a crucial baseline for tracking global youth development. (Youth Development Index Results Report, 2013)

Since its launch, the YDI has evolved to offer a more nuanced understanding of youth development. The 2016 edition expanded its scope to 183 countries and refined its indicators to improve depth and accuracy. The 2020 YDI further built upon this by incorporating 27 indicators across the domains, enabling a more detailed analysis, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Global Youth Development Report 2020) This edition underscored the urgent need for policies to strengthen youth resilience in the face of unprecedented global challenges. Most recently, the 2023 YDI continued to utilize the same set of 27 indicators across 181 countries, with a focus on emerging issues such as climate change and technological advancements, which increasingly influence youth development. (Global Youth Development Index, 2023)

Fig 7: Evolution of Global Youth Development Index



3.1.7 Global Key Findings

- a. From 2010 to 2022, the global Youth Development Index (YDI) increased by 2.8%, indicating steady improvement.
- b. Despite COVID-19 disruptions, the global YDI rose by 0.54% between 2019 and 2021, slightly outperforming prior years’ trends.
- c. Top Performers: Singapore leads, followed by Malta, Cyprus, New Zealand, and Brunei among Commonwealth countries.
- d. 90.7% of countries (166 out of 183) showed an increase in their YDI scores, with the largest improvements seen in Haiti, Côte d’Ivoire, Myanmar, Indonesia, and Burkina Faso.
- e. Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Angola saw significant YDI score declines.

Examining the six YDI domains – Education, Employment and Opportunity, Equality and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, Peace and Security, and Political and Civic Participation – all showed global improvements since 2010. (Global Youth Development Index, 2023)

- a. Political and Civic Participation remains the weakest, with the global average score peaking at 0.321 in 2021 and remaining unchanged in 2022.
- b. Employment and Opportunity showed the most significant global improvement at 6.1%, whereas Peace and Security recorded the smallest increase at 0.22%.
- c. Regionally, Sub-Saharan Africa experienced the most significant improvement in youth development, followed by South America, South Asia, and other regions like Asia-Pacific and Russia and Eurasia.

3.2: Reviewing the National Youth Policy

3.2.1 Background and Historical Evolution

3.2.1.1 Historical Context

The journey of India's National Youth Policy (NYP) is a narrative that reflects the evolving understanding and recognition of the critical role youth play in national development. National Youth Policy developed by the Indian government leverages the potential of India's youth. The policy aligns with the SDG goals and outlines a ten-year strategy. Despite being a young nation with a burgeoning youth population post-independence, India did not have a formalized youth policy until 1988. Recognizing the vital role youth play in national development, various programs were initiated post-independence, such as the National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS), and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS). However, these efforts needed a cohesive framework to address the diverse challenges youth nationwide face.

3.2.1.2 Policy Formation Process

The impetus to formalize a youth policy came with the declaration of the International Year of Youth in 1985 by the United Nations. This global recognition of youth issues highlighted the need for a dedicated policy in India to channel the energy and potential of its young population. Consequently, the Government of India established a separate Department of Youth Affairs and Sports, which initiated the formulation of the National Youth Policy. Following extensive consultations with various stakeholders, including voluntary organizations, the Draft National Youth Policy was presented and discussed at a conference of State Ministers in June 1987. This draft laid the groundwork for the first comprehensive National Youth Policy, which was formally adopted and laid on the Table of both houses of Parliament in November-December 1988.

3.2.2 Evolution of National Youth Policy

3.2.2.1 First National Youth Policy (1988)

The National Youth Policy 1988 was a landmark step in acknowledging the importance of youth in shaping the nation's future. It emphasized the rights and obligations of youth to actively participate in national development. The policy sought to create opportunities for the holistic development of young individuals, enabling them to become economically productive and socially useful citizens. The Committee for National Youth Programmes (CONYP) was established to oversee its implementation, with the Prime Minister as its chairperson. (Pareek & Sole, 2022)

3.2.2.2 Policy Revisions and Updates

As India underwent rapid socio-economic changes, it became evident that the 1988 policy needed revision. The country's economic liberalization in 1991 led to rapid economic growth, the rise of a sizable middle class, and a significant reduction in extreme poverty. Improved healthcare, higher literacy rates, and increased access to education marked progress, though disparities remained across regions and socioeconomic groups. Additionally, urbanization and changing values due to global influences reshaped societal norms, while rising inequality and environmental degradation emerged as critical challenges. In response to these transformations, the National Youth Policy was restructured in 2003 under the government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. (Sivakumar, 2012) This revised policy expanded the definition of youth by lowering the age group definition of youth from 15-35 years to 13-35 years and introduced new thrust areas such as youth empowerment, gender justice, inter-sectoral approaches, and the establishment of an information and research network. (Shahin Sultana, n.d.)

In 2010, the National Youth Policy was updated again, building on the framework of the 2003 policy. The 2010 policy aimed to reinforce existing policies and introduce new strategic interventions in response to global advancements and India's emergence as a global economic power. Key interventions included the launch of skill development initiatives to align youth skills with industry needs, programs to foster entrepreneurship and innovation, and efforts to increase youth participation in governance, promoting leadership and civic engagement among the young population. (National Youth Policy 2010 (NYP 2010), n.d.)

3.2.2.3 National Youth Policy 2014

As India continued to evolve on the global stage in digitalization, education and industrial development, the need for a more dynamic and responsive youth policy became evident. This led to the formulation of the National Youth Policy of 2014 (NYP-2014), which replaced the 2003 policy. The 2014 policy was launched in February 2014 after extensive consultations with stakeholders across the country. Unlike its predecessors, the NYP-2014 focused on empowering youth aged 15-29 years, which constituted 27.5% of India's population at the time. (Introduction of National Youth Policy-2014, 2014) The policy aimed to empower youth to achieve their full potential and outlined five key objectives, with identified priority areas for action. It served as a guiding document for youth development, with a mandate for periodic review to ensure continued relevance and impact. (raj, 2016)

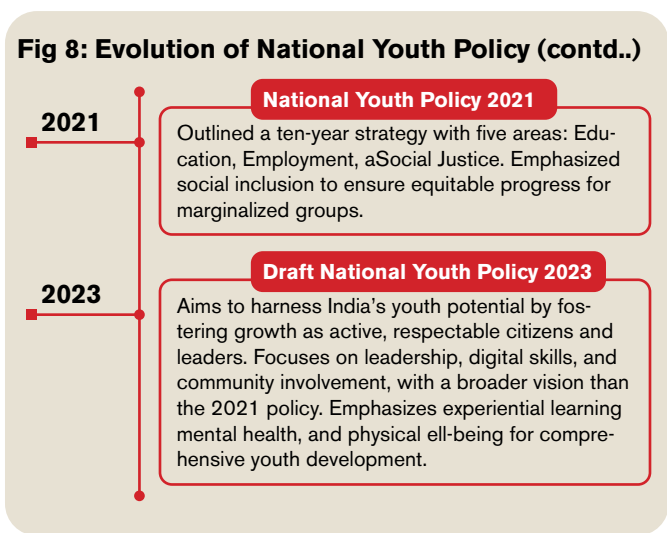
3.2.2.4 Recent Developments (2021-2023)

The most recent iteration of the National Youth Policy, NYP 2021 was developed by the Indian government to leverage the potential of India's youth by aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The policy outlines a ten-year strategy focused on five key areas: Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Youth Leadership, Health and Fitness, and Social Justice, all

grounded in the principle of social inclusion to ensure equitable progress for marginalized groups.

However, NYP 2021 faced significant loopholes that highlighted the need for rectification and amendments. The policy's approach to reintegrating NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth could have benefitted from specific timelines and more targeted schemes to address unemployment rates, particularly among disadvantaged groups. It also assumed equal access to opportunities for all youth, overlooking the vast disparities in socio-economic backgrounds that hinder many young people from accessing education and employment. Moreover, while addressing symptoms like dropouts, the policy did not sufficiently address deep-rooted structural barriers within the education system, such as economic migration, discrimination, and early marriages. (CivicsDaily, 2023)

The draft National Youth Policy (NYP) 2023 was developed in response to these gaps, aiming to address these shortcomings by nurturing India's youth into active, responsible citizens and leaders. It focuses on empowering young people through skill development, health and well-being support, and community engagement. Unlike the NYP 2021, which had a narrower scope, the 2023 policy adopts a broader vision that emphasizes not only education and employment but also leadership, digital skills, and community involvement. It



emphasizes facilitating leadership, innovation, and skill development while ensuring mental and physical well-being. The policy also focuses on social and economic inclusion, particularly through community engagement pathways like the NSS, and aims to reduce the proportion of youth - not in education, employment, or training (NEET). With a youth population of 37.14 crores, the policy seeks to harness this demographic dividend for inclusive growth and responsible governance, aligning with the broader vision of creating a new India. (GOI, n.d.)

Additionally, NYP 2023 highlights experiential learning and hands-on experience as crucial for skill development, while also giving more attention to mental and physical health. Overall, the policy aims to address a wider range of youth needs and aspirations, reflecting a more holistic approach to their development.

3.2.4 Current State of Youth Development in India

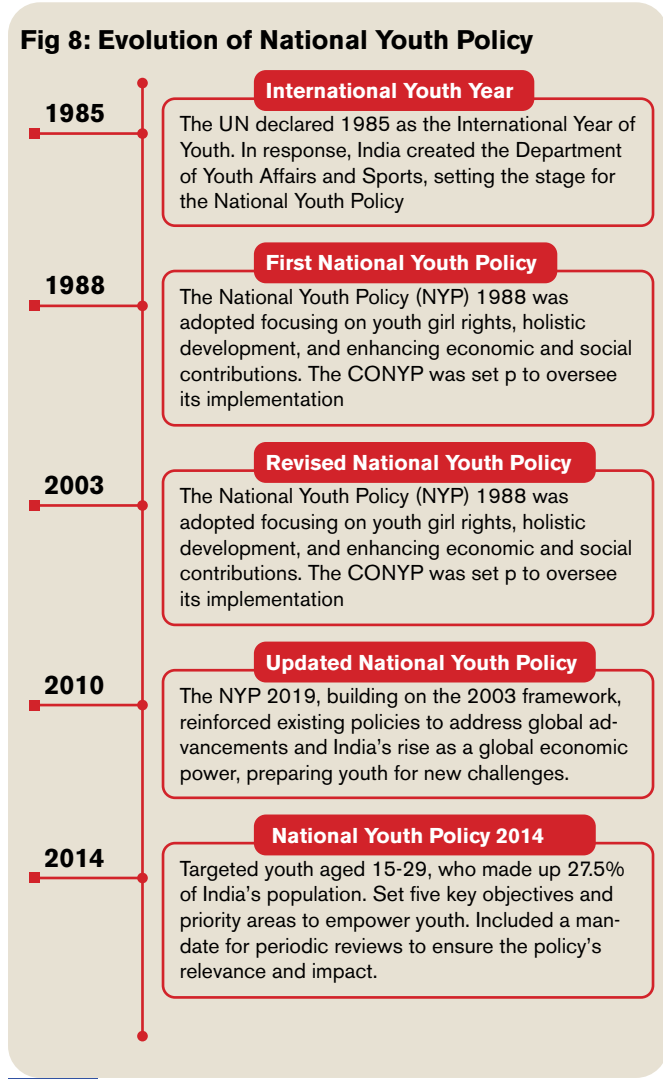
3.2.4.1 Educational Status

India's youth, representing over 250 million people, face a myriad of challenges that collectively hinder their potential and growth. At the core of these challenges is the education system, which, despite increased access, continues to face significant disparities. As of 2021-22, only 58.29% of youth aged 15-29 had completed secondary education, with the female literacy rate lagging at 64.7% compared to 80.9% for males. (Youth in India, 2022).

The outdated curriculum, coupled with limited access to vocational training—received by less than 10% of students—poses challenges in adequately preparing young people for the evolving job market. According to UDISE+ data for 2021-22, the dropout rate for secondary education stood at 14.6%, with significant variations across states and between genders. (PIB Delhi, 2017) This highlights the need to strengthen the education system's ability to retain students particularly in rural areas, where access to quality resources remains uneven.

3.2.4.2 Employment Scenario

These educational shortcomings directly impact employment prospects. The youth unemployment rate soared to 13.5% in 2023, nearly double the national average, with graduates from various fields facing



widespread underemployment. (Employment and Unemployment Scenario of India Directorate General of Employment, n.d.) The situation is particularly dire in rural areas, where youth have fewer job opportunities and limited access to entrepreneurial support. Although rural unemployment had decreased to 4.4% by 2022-23, it spiked to 7.8% in April 2024, (Youth in India, 2022) emphasizing the volatility of the job market and the vulnerability of rural youth. Furthermore, the system suffers from a significant skill mismatch, with the curriculum not aligned with the demands of the modern job market. Less than 10% of youth receive any formal vocational training, leaving many ill-equipped for employment. (Youth in India, 2022)

3.2.4.3 Health and Well-being

Health issues exacerbate these challenges, compounding the difficulties faced by India's youth. Lifestyle-related diseases, including diabetes and obesity, are becoming more common, while anemia affects over 50% of adolescent girls, leading to serious long-term health complications. Data from NFHS-5 indicates that 34% of adolescents are underweight, highlighting widespread malnutrition. These health concerns, coupled with inadequate nutrition, significantly impact the overall well-being and development of young people.

Data from the National Health Mission reveals that 29.4% of Indian adults aged 18-49 are overweight or obese, with many youth also suffering from malnutrition or chronic conditions. Mental health concerns are on the rise, with the National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) indicating that 15.2% of Indians aged 18-29 experience mental health issues. Additionally, sexual and reproductive health challenges persist, particularly in rural areas, where limited access to healthcare and sexual education contributes to high rates of child marriage and early pregnancies.

Limited access to sexual and reproductive health services is a pressing issue, with only 47% of young women in rural areas having access to menstrual hygiene products, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) 2019-21.

3.2.4.4 Social Justice Issues

Social justice issues further complicate the challenges faced by India's youth, with gender inequality standing out as a significant barrier. Despite various advancements, gender disparities remain deeply entrenched. For instance, women continue to experience a substantial pay gap, earning about 27% less than men for comparable work, as reported by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This pay gap underscores the broader issues of unequal access to education and employment opportunities. Additionally, the prevalence of sexual abuse and child marriage highlights persistent gender-based discrimination, with 23% of girls still being married before the age of 18, despite legal prohibitions (UNICEF, 2023). While efforts such as the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act have aimed to curb child labor, the practice remains widespread. According to the Census 2011, 10.1 million children are still engaged in work, illustrating that legislative measures have yet to

fully eradicate this issue. These persistent and specific challenges contribute to a more complex and difficult environment for India's youth, intertwining with educational and health concerns to create a multifaceted problem. (Youth in India, 2022).

Crime rates against youth, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, are disturbingly high, with 31,677 cases of rape reported in 2021 alone, with a significant number involving victims who are minors (under 18) or young adults (18-24). (Statista, 2022) This creates a sense of insecurity and fear among young people. The suicide rate among youth has also reached alarming levels, with over 45,000 young lives lost in 2020 alone, reflecting a growing mental health crisis. (Youth in India, 2022).

The challenges facing India's youth, including gaps in education and employment, coupled with health and safety concerns, perpetuate a cycle that hinders their full potential. The National Youth Policy (NYP) acknowledges these multifaceted issues by setting out comprehensive strategies aimed at improving educational outcomes, enhancing job opportunities, and addressing health concerns. For example, the NYP focuses on promoting quality education through skill development and vocational training, which aligns with the need for better preparedness for the job market. It also emphasizes health and well-being by integrating initiatives for mental health support and improved access to healthcare services. While the NYP provides a framework for these improvements, its success depends on effective implementation and collaboration among government, civil society, and the private sector.

3.2.5 Policy Initiatives and Action Points

In the light of the challenges faced by India's youth, effectively utilizing the country's growing youth population is vital for driving national progress. Addressing the gaps in education, employment and health requires a coordinated effort from various government bodies and stakeholders. To tackle these issues, the Government of India, along with State Governments and numerous partners, has launched a range of youth-centric programs. These initiatives are designed to address the diverse needs of young people, from enhancing educational opportunities and vocational training to improving health services and mental well-being.

While ministries like Education, Employment & Training, and Health and Family Welfare are pivotal in addressing specific issues, the Department of Youth Affairs serves a critical role in orchestrating and harmonizing these efforts. By acting as a central facilitator, it ensures that policies and programs are effectively implemented and that youth issues are comprehensively addressed. In this section, we will delve into the specific stakeholders involved, the policy initiatives they have introduced, and the action plans in place. These initiatives are designed to ensure that the youth are not only participants but also key drivers in the nation's development.

3.2.5.1 Education Sector Initiatives

The education sector in India is dedicated to ensuring equitable access to quality education for all, empowering youth from diverse backgrounds to shape their futures. Key stakeholders in this sector include the Ministry of Education, State Education Departments, and the University Grants Commission (UGC). Central to this mission are initiatives like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). SSA focuses on providing elementary education

to children aged six to fourteen, while also addressing gender, social, and regional disparities through community participation. RMSA extends this focus to secondary education, broadening access and enhancing educational outcomes across the country.

These efforts align with the objectives of the National Youth Policy, 2021, which emphasizes not only access to quality education but also the development of critical career and life skills. Below is a detailed table outlining the stakeholders, initiatives, and action plans proposed for this sector.

Table 2: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Education Sector of NYP, 2021

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
1. Government Bodies		
a. Ministry of Education	1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)	1. Make Education Systems Relevant for the Youth
	2. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)	a. Curriculum Reforms: Update the curriculum to include 21st-century skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, STEM skills, digital literacy, and financial literacy. Build teacher capacity for effective delivery.
b. State Education Departments	3. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SmSA)	b. Value-Based Education: Integrate value-based education into the curriculum to foster civic responsibility, social justice, and an appreciation for art and culture.
c. University Grants Commission (UGC)	4. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020	c. Vocational Education: Strengthen and scale up vocational education in classes 6 to 12, aligning with industry needs, changing perceptions about vocational education, and integrating practical exposure and apprenticeships.
d. Relevant Central Ministries/ Departments and Agencies (for curriculum review and upgradation): NCTE, AICTE, NCERT, UGC, and NUEPA.	5. Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (VSHSE)	2. Support NEET Youth
2. Educational Institutions		
a. Public and private schools	1. Inclusive Education for the Disabled at the Secondary Stage (IEDSS)	a. Retention: Ensure retention of at-risk youths through data-driven identification, counseling, enhanced scholarships, and community partnerships.
	2. Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)	b. Reintegration: Implement programs to reintegrate dropouts and out-of-school youth into the education system with support from NGOs and private sector organizations.
b. Colleges and universities	3. Ashram Schools for Tribal Students:	c. Distance Learning: Expand access to quality secondary and higher education and strengthen distance learning programs, especially leveraging technology to reach underserved areas.
c. Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) (TISS, NIOS)	4. National Service Scheme (NSS)	d. Learning Programs: Develop specific learning programs for NEET youth focusing on basic literacy, life skills, vocational training, and value-based education.
d. Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)	5. National Overseas Scholarship Scheme	e. Build an Inclusive Education System for Marginalized and Disadvantaged Youth

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
e. Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)		f. Strengthen Schemes: Enhance schemes like IEDSS and ashram schools for tribal students, ensuring early integration and continued education for SC, ST, and other marginalized sections.
3. NGOs and CSOs		
a. NGOs focusing on education for marginalized communities : (Teach For India, Smile Foundation)		a. Inclusive Resources and Pedagogies: Create and ensure the availability of inclusive curricular resources in tribal languages and disability-friendly formats.
		b. Trained Teachers: Ensure the availability of trained teachers, counselors, and therapists to support the education of disadvantaged youth, focusing on their specific needs.
b. Civil Society Organizations involved in educational reform: (NACO, IES, AIPMA, NDDDB)		c. Special Efforts for Tribal Youth: Improve literacy rates, Gross Enrollment Ratios (GER), and reduce drop-out rates among tribal youth with tailored education programs and language support.
c. NGOs and private sector organizations running non-formal education centers (SEWA)		
4. Other Stakeholders		
a. Teachers and educators		
b. Students and youth organizations		
c. Parents and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs)		
d. Technology providers for education (BYJUS, EdTech)		

3.2.5.2 Employment and Entrepreneurship Programs

Building on the educational foundation, the Employment and Entrepreneurship sector emerges as a critical focus area of the National Youth Policy, 2021. This sector addresses the urgent need for job creation while fostering a culture of innovation and self-reliance among India's youth. The Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) play leading roles in this endeavor. Through initiatives like

the Skill India Mission and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), the sector equips young people with industry-relevant skills, ensuring sustainable employment and encouraging entrepreneurial ventures. The synergy between education and employment is vital, as a well-educated youth population is better prepared to secure jobs and contribute to the nation's economic growth. Below is a detailed table outlining the stakeholders, initiatives and action plans proposed for this sector.

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
1. Government Bodies:	1. Skill India Mission	1. Revitalize the Rural Economy and Retain Youth
a. Ministry of Labour and Employment	2. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)	a. Make Agriculture Viable: Strengthen agriculture and allied sectors to create sustainable income opportunities for rural youth.
b. Niti Aayog	3. Startup India	b. Support Additional Income: Foster growth in the broader food processing value chain, including animal husbandry and poultry farming, to generate additional jobs.

Table 3: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Employment and Entrepreneurship Sector of NYP, 2021

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
c. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)	4. National Career Service (NCS) Portal	2. Develop Micro-Regional Employment Strategies for Urban/Peri-Urban Areas
d. State Government Departments (Youth, Employment, and Entrepreneurship)	5. National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)	a. District-Level Ownership: Implement district-level employment strategies with clear goals and accountability to enhance local employment.
2. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)	6. PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)	b. SME Cluster Development: Strengthen programs supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through infrastructure investment, simplified regulations, and accessible credit schemes.
3. Ministry of Education and Finance.	7. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)	3. Strengthen Youth Entrepreneurship
4. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)	8. Mudra Yojana for MSMEs	a. Entrepreneurship Education: Integrate entrepreneurship into school curriculums and establish rural enterprise centers in business schools.
	9. Credit guarantee schemes for startups	b. Support Social Enterprises: Define social enterprises legally, reduce compliance requirements, and provide tax benefits to encourage social entrepreneurship.
		c. National Mentorship Networks: Create a National Mentorship Program to support young entrepreneurs with structured guidance at the district and block levels.
5. Support the Informal and Gig Economy		a. Social Security for Gig Workers: Provide effective social security provisions for informal sector and gig economy workers.
		b. Strengthen Unnati Platform: Enhance the Unnati platform for better demand-supply matching in gig work.
6. Cross-Cutting Reforms to Drive Overall Employment		a. Reform Skilling Ecosystem: Align skilling initiatives with job market trends.
		b. Rationalize Government Schemes: Review and streamline existing government schemes related to employment, entrepreneurship, and skilling.
		c. Support Urban Migrants: Provide systemic support to the urban migrant population, including specific measures for inclusion in employment opportunities.
		d. Inclusion of Marginalized Youth: Focus on including marginalized youth segments in employment opportunities.

3.2.5.3 Youth Leadership Development

As education and employment pave the way, the Youth Leadership and Development sector takes center stage in the National Youth Policy, 2021. This sector aims to harness the potential of young leaders to tackle India's most pressing challenges. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS), in collaboration with other ministries and civil society organizations, drives initiatives like the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and the National Service Scheme (NSS). These programs are designed to build

leadership skills and promote civic engagement among youth, empowering them to take on leadership roles in their communities. However, the challenge remains in effectively engaging marginalized groups and ensuring that leadership opportunities are accessible to all segments of the youth population. This sector's focus on leadership development is crucial for creating a generation of informed, active, and responsible citizens. Below is a detailed table that lists the stakeholders, initiatives, and action plans proposed for this sector.

Table 4: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Youth Leadership and Development Sector of NYP, 2021		
STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
Ministry of Defence (NCC)	1. Leadership and Volunteering Schemes	1. Strengthen the Youth Volunteering Ecosystem
Ministry of Rural Development (Bharat Nirman)	a. National Cadet Corps (NCC)	Streamline Volunteering Opportunities and Enhance the Youth Volunteering Journey: Merge existing initiatives, establish standardized guidelines, and integrate technology for strategic, long-term youth engagement.
Ministry of Education (Vidyanjali)	b. Bharat Nirman Volunteers (BNV)	Encourage Young People to Volunteer and Ensure Due Rewards and Recognition: Promote volunteering through youth icons and formalize recognition systems like the National Youth Awards.
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (ASHAs)	c. Vidyanjali - School Volunteer Programme	Equip Youth Volunteers with Necessary Resources and Skills, and Develop Their Social Capital: Provide targeted training, resources, and mentorship to build youth capacity and social capital.
National Disaster Management Authority (Apda Mitra)	d. National Service Scheme (NSS)	2. Invest in Youth Leadership Development
Ministry of Women & Child Development (Mahila Police Volunteers)	e. Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)	Expand Youth Leadership Development Opportunities through Higher Education and Leadership Programs: Integrate leadership training into higher education and provide specialized programs for additional exposure.
Ministry of Law & Justice (Nyay Mitra)	f. Indian Red Cross Volunteers	Provide Opportunities for the Youth to Engage with Governance and Politics: Facilitate youth engagement in governance and politics through internships, fellowships, and awareness initiatives.
Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (DIGI – SEVAK)	g. Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)	Raise Leadership Aspirations through Role Models and Wider Exposure: Promote youth leaders and broaden exposure through media, exchanges, and conferences.
Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (WCCB Volunteers)	h. Apda Mitra	3. Mobilize a One-Stop Youth Platform
Ministry of Human Resource Development (Vidyanjali - School Volunteer Programme)	i. Mahila Police Volunteers	Mobilize a One-Stop Youth Volunteering and Development Platform to Achieve Youth Leadership Goals: Develop an integrated online platform for centralized access to volunteering and leadership opportunities.
Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (Swachhagrahis)	j. Nyay Mitra	4. Develop Leadership in Marginalized Youths
State Governments and District Authorities	k. Digital India Volunteer (DIGI – SEVAK)	a. a. Ensure Inclusion of Disadvantaged and Marginalized Youths and Develop Leadership Capacities in Them: Design targeted programs and promote inclusive leadership to empower marginalized youth.
National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC)	b. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) Volunteers	

	c. m. Swachhagrahis/ Community Volunteers under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan	
	2. Youth Leadership Development Opportunities	
	a. Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates fellowship	
	b. Young Professionals programme at NITI Aayog	

3.2.5.4 Health and Sports Programs

A well-educated, employed, and leadership-oriented youth population must also be healthy, which is where the Health and Well-being sector comes into play under the National Youth Policy, 2021. This sector is dedicated to ensuring the health and well-being of all youth, promoting a culture of sports and fitness. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the National Health Mission, and various educational institutions and sports organizations are key stakeholders in this effort. Initiatives like the National Health Mission, which integrates rural and urban health missions,

focus on maternal and child health, communicable diseases, and strengthening the overall health system. Moreover, programs such as Khelo India and the Fit India Movement aim to promote sports and physical activities at the grassroots level, fostering a healthier, more active youth population. The interconnectedness of health, education, and leadership is evident, as a healthy youth population is better equipped to lead and contribute to society. Below is a detailed table outlining the stakeholders, initiatives, and action plans proposed for this sector.

Table 5: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Health and Well-being Sector of NYP, 2021

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
Government Agencies	1. National Health Mission (NHM)	1. Strengthen Preventive Healthcare
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)	National Rural Health Mission and the National Urban Health Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate Education on Youth Health Issues in School and College Curriculum Include mental health, substance abuse, and sexual and reproductive health in the curriculum from early classes, emphasizing preventative practices and peer support.
2. National Health Mission	2. Ayushman Bharat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Large-Scale Campaign to Improve Youth Awareness of Critical Health Issues Launch a national campaign to enhance awareness, debunk myths, and encourage open discussions on mental health, substance abuse, and sexual health.
3. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE)	3. POSHAN Abhiyaan	2. Strengthen Treatment Healthcare
	4. WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Adequate Availability of Mental Health Professionals and Access to Quality Treatment Increase mental health professional training, integrate services in primary health centers, and improve access through telehealth and rural mental health mentors.
	5. Swachh Bharat Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Treatment and Rehabilitation Capacities for Substance Abuse Disorders Expand affordable rehabilitation centers, and support groups, and align efforts between relevant ministries for effective substance abuse treatment.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Access and Capacities for Sexual and Reproductive Health Treatment • Enhance PHC capacities for sexual and reproductive health services, conduct regular health camps, and provide information and support for women's health issues.
		3. Track Youth Health Metrics and Leverage Technology and Data
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage Data and Technology to Track Youth Health Metrics and Improve Treatment Delivery • Implement age-segmented health data collection, create digital health profiles, and support telemedicine initiatives to enhance preventive care and treatment.
		4. Provide Quality Healthcare Access to Marginalized Youths
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure Marginalized Youths Have Access to Quality Healthcare b. Develop culturally relevant awareness programs, set up medical camps, address barriers for urban migrants, and establish rehabilitation centers with disability aids and professional training.
Sports and Fitness		
Sports Authority of India	1. Fit India Movement	1. Build a Culture of Sports and Fitness
	2. Khelo India	a. Develop Fitness as a Trend and Foster Healthy Habits: Scale up open-air gyms in parks and ensure adequate park spaces through regulatory mechanisms.
	3. NITI Aayog's Sports Revitalisation Action Plan	b. Create an Ecosystem to Develop Sports as a Culture from an Early Age: Implement one hour of sports daily in schools with guidelines for playgrounds and qualified physical education teachers.
	4. Target Olympic Podium Scheme	2. Enable Holistic Development of Sportspersons
		a. a. Expand talent search programs to rural areas and small communities
		b. Develop Quality Coaching and Long-Term Support: Train and monitor coaches, offering incentives such as salary increases and promotions.
		c. Increase Equitable Investment in Sports Infrastructure: Invest in sports infrastructure in schools and communities, especially in underserved areas.
		3. Ensure Inclusion of Marginalized Youths in Sports and Fitness
		a. Drive special efforts to include marginalized communities in sports programs
		b. Enhance Media Coverage and Support for Indigenous Sports: Promoting fair coverage of all sports, including indigenous, women's, and disability sports.

3.2.5.5 Social Justice Measures

Finally, ensuring that all youth, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to thrive is the focus of the Social Justice sector under the National Youth Policy, 2021. This sector envisions a society where every young person, particularly those from marginalized communities, feels safe, included, and empowered to exercise their rights. Government bodies like Juvenile Justice Boards, the National Human Rights Commission, and various civil society organizations are instrumental in driving this vision forward. The NYP highlights critical laws such as the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention

of Atrocities) Act and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, which align with the policy's objectives to safeguard vulnerable groups. Additionally, the Right to Information Act plays a crucial role in promoting transparency and informed youth participation. The policy also emphasizes the need to strengthen legal aid and support systems to ensure enhanced delivery of social justice. This sector ties together the broader goals of the NYP, ensuring that all youth can participate fully in society, free from discrimination and violence. Below is a detailed table listing the stakeholders, initiatives, and action plans proposed for this sector.

Table 6: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Social Justice Sector of NYP, 2021

STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
Government Agencies	1. Social Protection Measures	1. Empower and Safeguard the Youth
1. National Legal Services Authority	a. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act	Build a Value-Based Social Fabric to Reduce Acts of Discrimination and Violence: By Implementing behavior change communication strategies to influence youth attitudes and community behavior patterns.
2. State Governments	b. National Commission for Backward Classes Act	Provide the Youth with Safe Spaces, Knowledge, and Support Services: In every block and district, offering psycho-social support, legal aid, and counseling.
3. Juvenile Justice Boards	c. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act	2. Raise Youth Awareness Regarding Rights and Initiatives Related to Legal Aid: through legal literacy clubs and nationwide campaigns
5. National Human Rights Commission	d. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act	Prevent and Address Cybercrimes that Disproportionately Affect the Youth: Strengthen digital literacy in schools to educate on online safety and address cybercrimes through improved reporting systems and support networks.
6. National Legal Services Authority	e. Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act	2. Enable Faster Delivery of Justice and Strengthen Juvenile Rehabilitation
Civil Society Organizations	2. Technology-Driven Access to Justice	Enable Faster Delivery of Justice Through Strengthening the Legal System: Strengthen and operationalize Gram Nyayalayas to ensure speedy justice and reduce the burden on higher courts.
1. NGOs working with marginalized and vulnerable youth	a. Scheme for Action Research and Studies on Judicial Reforms	Ensure Effective Implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act and Rehabilitation of Delinquent Youth: Establish and adequately staff juvenile justice boards and child welfare committees, and implement effective rehabilitation programs for delinquent youth.
2. Faith-Based Organizations	b. Right to Information Act	3. Ensure Social Justice for Marginalized and Vulnerable Youths
3. Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs)	c. Central Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), Tele-Law	Review and Enhance All Social Protection Schemes for Inclusive Impact: like PMJVK and One Stop Centres to ensure they effectively support marginalized youth.
4. Community Service Organisations (CSOs)	d. Tele-Law and the Nyaya Bandhu access scheme.	

Table 6: List of the Stakeholders, Initiatives, and Action Plans for Social Justice Sector of NYP, 2021		
STAKEHOLDERS	INITIATIVES	ACTION PLANS
Educational Institutions	3. Inclusive Social Protection Schemes	
1. Schools and Colleges (for implementing social values and digital literacy curricula)	a. Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)	
2. National and State Law Schools	b. Accessible India Campaign	
Youth Networks	c. North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme	
1. National Service Scheme (NSS)	d. Revised Scheme of Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups	
2. Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)	e. One stop Centres	
3. Youth Clubs and Samaj Kalyan Kendra		
Judicial and Legal Aid Providers		
1. Legal literacy clubs		
1. Pro bono legal aid platforms (e.g., Nyaya Bandhu)		

3.2.6 Overall Policy Outcomes

3.2.6.1 Achievement Analysis

The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021 has significantly influenced various sectors by addressing the diverse needs of India's youth. Its impact is evident across multiple domains, including education, employment, health, sports, and social justice. The policy aims to transform these areas through targeted initiatives and strategic interventions, reflecting a commitment to empowering the youth.

In education, the NYP 2021 aims to transform the educational landscape through inclusivity, accessibility, and quality. As of 2020-21, 58.29% of youth aged 15-29 have completed secondary education, with 24.76% achieving middle-level education. (GOI, 2023) These indicators reflect progress towards the NEP 2020's goals of improving educational attainment and inclusivity. The NEP 2020 emphasizes enhancing the quality of education through holistic development and experiential learning. The rise in the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education, from 23.7% in 2014-15 to 28.4% in 2021-22, with notable increase in female enrollment, demonstrates the policy's impact on improving access to education and supporting diverse learning needs. (Ministry of Education,

2021). However, challenges remain, such as ensuring educational quality for marginalized groups and reducing the current 23.5% rate of youth neither in education, employment, or training (NEET). (ILOSTAT, 2024) These efforts align with NEP's objectives to foster an inclusive, equitable, and quality educational environment.

In employment and entrepreneurship, the NYP 2021 intersects with initiatives like the Skill India Mission, which trained 14 million individuals, including 5.4 million in upskilling and reskilling. (Skill India Mission | IBEF, 2023) Digital skilling saw 30% of youth trained by 2021-22. Financial support under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) disbursed 27.75 lakh crore, benefiting over 47 crore entrepreneurs. (PIB Delhi, 2023) The Startup India initiative recognized 1,40,803 startups by June 2024, creating 15.53 lakh jobs. (Ministry of Commerce & Industry, 2024) The PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) supported over 80,000 micro-enterprises, including 36,806 women-led units. (PMEGP, 2024) These initiatives collectively enhance employment opportunities and entrepreneurship, though challenges such as regional disparities and access to finance remain.

Youth development and leadership under the NYP 2021 are supported by various organized programs and collaborations. Programs like the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) engage youth in volunteering, with the Youth Parliament and grassroots leadership initiatives further fostering civic engagement. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) uses digital platforms like the MY Bharat portal—a comprehensive platform designed to engage and connect youth with various government initiatives and opportunities. Additionally, 25,803 youth clubs have mobilized 31,44,596 young people for various activities. (UNDP, 2023) These efforts aim to enhance opportunities for all youth, with specific programs targeting marginalized groups such as economically disadvantaged youth, rural and remote area residents, and those from minority communities.

In the domain of health, the NYP 2021 focuses on improving healthcare access and mental health support. The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) issued over 34.7 crore cards, (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2024) and the National Health Mission (NHM) established 24,935 Primary Health Centers (PHCs), with 45.1% operating round-the-clock. (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2021) The Mental Healthcare Act of 2017 ensures comprehensive rights and access to mental health care, while the National Tele Mental Health Programme (NTMHP), launched in October 2022, provides 24/7 tele-counseling and specialist consultations nationwide, enhancing mental health services. The Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) addresses adolescent health needs through community interventions, peer education, and health awareness programs, focusing on sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, and disease prevention.

In sports and fitness, the NYP 2021 promotes physical health through the Khelo India program, which saw its budget rise to 880 crore for 2023-24 (Union Budget, 2024) and has produced notable athletes at international events. “The Fit India Movement encourages daily physical activity with the slogan ‘Mai Fit India Fit.’ The policy also supports sports inclusivity through various initiatives, including the Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) program, which aims to assess 20 lakh young athletes across India and has launched across 50 centers with plans to scout and train talent in over 10 sports. (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2024)

Social justice under the NYP 2021 emphasizes equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. Legal literacy clubs, with over 1,200 clubs engaging more than 50,000 students, aim to educate young people about their rights. The Scheduled Castes and The Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, plays a crucial role in preventing atrocities against these communities, with 676,446 cases registered under this law by 2021. The NYP also aligns with key legislation and technology-driven initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) and the Accessible India Campaign to further support marginalized groups

Overall, the NYP 2021 has achieved notable progress across sectors like education, employment, youth development, health, sports, and social justice. However, persistent challenges require ongoing efforts to ensure the policy’s objectives are fully realized, contributing to a more equitable and empowered youth population in India.

3.2.6.2 Implementation Challenges

Implementing the National Youth Policy 2021 (NYP 2021) has proven to be a challenging endeavor due to several interconnected issues. These challenges reflect systemic barriers that hinder the policy’s effective rollout and its potential to benefit India’s youth.

One of the primary obstacles is the lack of coordination among various agencies and stakeholders. While the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MOYAS) is the nodal agency responsible for overseeing NYP 2021, its ability to manage the wide range of associated departments and stakeholders is limited. The policy involves numerous entities, such as the ministries of Skill Development, Rural Development, and Education. Ideally, these entities would work in perfect harmony, but in reality, the absence of a centralized coordination mechanism leads to fragmented efforts and inefficiencies. For example, while MOYAS sets the overall direction, the practical implementation often depends on contributions from various departments, each guided by its specific mandates and operational priorities. This dispersed approach complicates the integration of youth-focused initiatives across different sectors.

Adding to complexity is the limited presence of dedicated personnel within each department to focus specifically on youth issues related to NYP 2021. Given the policy’s broad scope and significance, having a specialized unit or designated officers or units within each sector can ensure better alignment and integration with the policy’s objectives. Strengthening such mechanisms can enhance coherence and make sure that there are less chances of gaps in policy execution and oversight.

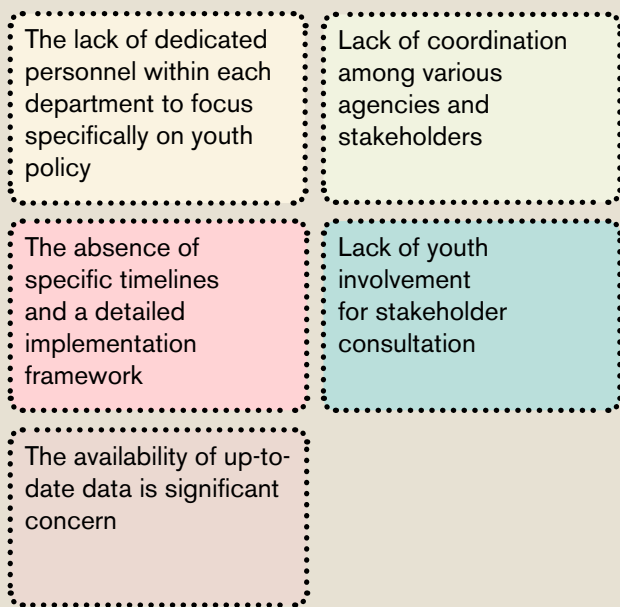
Another significant challenge is the absence of specific timelines and a detailed implementation framework. NYP 2021 outlines several initiatives and action plans but lacks a structured timeline or comprehensive framework for their execution. Without clear implementation timelines and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, it becomes difficult to track progress, measure impact, and adjust strategies as needed. This oversight impedes the ability to set clear milestones, ensure accountability, and adapt to emerging issues.

Effective implementation of NYP 2021 also requires meaningful stakeholder consultation. The policy is intended to benefit the youth, yet there are concerns among some youth about their involvement in shaping the policy. Their perspectives are crucial for tailoring initiatives to their real needs and challenges. Engaging youth through consultations and feedback mechanisms can help ensure that the policy addresses their concerns and is more likely to achieve its intended outcomes.

Finally, the availability of up-to-date data is a significant concern. The last National Youth Development Index was published in 2018, and there has been no subsequent

update. Reliance on outdated data, combined with the absence of new census data since 2011, restricts the ability to accurately assess the current state of youth development. Without current and comprehensive data, it is challenging to monitor progress, evaluate the effectiveness of NYP 2021 initiatives, and make informed decisions. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced inter-agency collaboration, dedicated resources, clear implementation plans, and improved data management to ensure the policy’s successful execution and meaningful impact on youth development.

Fig 10: Implementation Challenges of National Youth Policy



2022, involving extensive research and comparative studies of 15-20 state policies and youth policies from 8-10 countries. This ensured that the new policy was both globally informed and locally tailored. (MP Youth Policy 2023)

An extensive consultation process reached over 10,000 youth through district-level consultations, discussions in educational institutions, and engagements with civil society organizations. The MyGov portal proved instrumental, gathering 3,018 specific suggestions on themes such as education, sports, financing, and enterprise, categorized based on recurring themes.

Fig 11: Policy Development Process of the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy



3.3: Reviewing Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy

3.3.1 Background and History of the MP State Youth Policy

3.3.1.1 Demographic Context and Policy Evolution

The Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy 2023 was developed with an understanding of the state’s significant youth demographic. With an average age of 28, Madhya Pradesh, is positioned at a crucial demographic juncture, offering opportunities for youth-driven growth. The youth population, aged 15-29, represents nearly a quarter of the state’s population, creating both an opportunity and responsibility for targeted youth development initiatives.

The state’s history with youth policy began in 2008 with its first Youth Policy. However, our primary research interviews with officials revealed that the previous policy had become outdated, lacking responses to contemporary challenges.” The state needed a new youth policy,” stated a senior official, underscoring the need for a refreshed and responsive framework.

3.3.1.2 Policy Development Process

The development of the 2023 policy followed a bottom-up approach, initiated by the Youth Maha panchayat held in Bhopal on July 23-24, 2022. Our research interviews highlighted that policy formulation began in September

3.3.1.3 Stakeholder Collaboration and Policy Formulation

Following this foundational research and comparative study, the policy team engaged with key stakeholders across various levels to ensure broad representation and inclusivity in the formulation process. Through our primary research interviews, we learned that various forums were established to discuss specific focus areas. These included dedicated sessions on education expectations, enterprise and livelihood creation, health, and environmental concerns. Civil society organizations, volunteers, and youth representatives participated actively in these consultations to ensure the policy would be universal and inclusive.

The collaborative approach extended to all major institutional stakeholders. Educational institutions across the state were actively engaged, with letters sent to colleges requesting them to conduct consultations at their level and gather youth expectations. The policy development team worked closely with multiple government departments, including education, health, sports and youth welfare, and others. As revealed in our interviews, each department’s suggestions were carefully reviewed and incorporated, ensuring that the final policy would align with existing governmental frameworks while pushing for new initiatives.

A notable aspect of this collaboration was the integration of expertise from various domains. According to our primary research, once the initial blueprint was created, the policy team consulted with principal secretaries and secretaries of each relevant department. These consultations helped refine the policy’s domains and strategies, ensuring they were both ambitious and achievable. The process involved multiple iterations and discussions, with departments reviewing each point in detail and offering alternatives based on their implementation experience.

The final policy document was shaped through this extensive collaborative process, reflecting inputs from youth at the grassroots level to top government officials. It was finally launched in March 2023, marking a significant milestone in Madhya Pradesh’s approach to youth development. This collaborative and consultative approach to policy development sets a new standard for inclusive policy-making in the state.

modifying it to suit state-level needs. For instance, while the National Youth Policy focused on five key areas - Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Youth Leadership, Health and Fitness, and Social Justice - the MP Youth Policy expanded this to eight domains including additional focus areas like Art and Culture, Environmental Protection, and Sports and Fitness. This adaptation reflects both the state’s cultural richness and its recognition of emerging priorities for youth development. Such thoughtful localization of the national framework, while maintaining its core principles, positions the MP Youth Policy 2023 as a comprehensive and contextually relevant document for youth development in the state.

3.3.2. Overview of the MP Youth Policy 2023

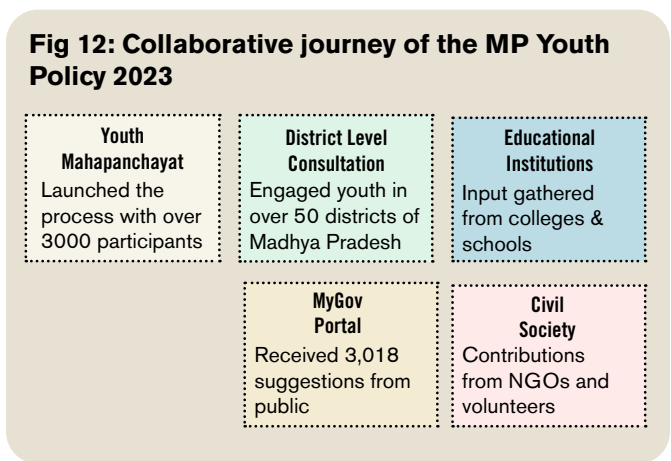
Madhya Pradesh, with nearly a quarter of its population aged 15-29, stands to benefit greatly from a comprehensive youth policy that leverages this demographic dividend. (MP Youth Policy 2023)

3.3.2.1 Vision and Core Objectives

The MP Youth Policy 2023 aims to empower youth aged 15-29 to reach their potential and contribute to the state’s economic and social development. (MP Youth Policy 2023)The vision is supported by twelve objectives focused on transforming youth into skilled entrepreneurs, active citizens, and responsible individuals who are mentally and physically healthy, environmentally aware, and culturally connected.

3.3.2.2 Key Focus Areas and Initiatives

The Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy presents a holistic approach to youth development, recognizing the diverse and multifaceted challenges faced by young people today. The policy identifies eight key focus areas that collectively aim to address the educational, economic, social, and cultural needs of the youth, providing them with the tools and opportunities to lead meaningful, productive lives. These areas—Education and Skills Development, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Health, Youth Leadership and Social Work, Sports and Fitness, Art and Culture, Environmental Protection, and Inclusion and Equality—are interconnected, each contributing to a broader vision of youth empowerment in the state.



3.3.1.4 Alignment with National Framework

The MP Youth Policy 2023 demonstrates both alignment with and adaptation of the National Youth Policy framework. While maintaining consistency with national objectives, the state policy was deliberately crafted to address MP-specific challenges and opportunities. As revealed through our primary research, the policy developers studied the draft National Youth Policy extensively, adopting its domain-based approach but

Aspect	National Youth Policy, 2021	Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy, 2023
Vision	Unlock the potential of youth to advance India	Empower youth to realize potential for state’s economic and social development
Target Age Group	15-29 years	15-29 years
Core Framework & Domain Areas	The NYP focuses on five key domains: Education, Employment & Entrepreneurship, Youth Leadership, Health & Fitness, and Social Justice.	The MP Youth Policy expands this to eight domains, adding Art & Culture, Environmental Protection, and Sports & Fitness to address regional priorities.
State-Specific Adaptation	The NYP provides a broad national framework with a focus on youth empowerment and inclusion, but lacks state-level customization.	The MP Youth Policy is tailored to Madhya Pradesh’s specific needs, reflecting the state’s cultural diversity and emerging challenges in areas like environmental sustainability and rural development.

Education and Skills Development serves as the foundation for empowering youth, enabling them to access better opportunities and contribute meaningfully to society. In alignment with the National Education Policy 2020, the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy prioritizes improving education accessibility, with a goal to achieve a 50% Gross Enrollment Ratio by 2035. The policy places a significant emphasis on digital literacy and STEM education, with a strong focus on gender parity in educational access. (MP Youth Policy 2023) Special provisions are made to reduce dropout rates, such as offering multiple entry and exit options in curricula. Additionally, vocational training is promoted through institutions like ITIs, Polytechnic colleges, and Regional Extension Centers, ensuring that young people are equipped with industry-aligned skills. Furthermore, initiatives like scholarships and e-learning resources provide marginalized youth with opportunities to bridge the educational divide. These efforts are complemented by internships, vocational education, and youth innovation funds that prepare young individuals for the workforce.

The Employment and Entrepreneurship focus on addressing the critical challenge of youth unemployment, especially in rural areas where a large proportion of youth work in the informal sector. In Madhya Pradesh, over 80% of informal sector workers are engaged in the gig economy, a growing field where individuals work as freelancers, part-time employees, or flexible workers. Recognizing the need for sustainable income opportunities, the policy promotes Agri-Tech, animal husbandry, and rural entrepreneurship through public-private partnerships in food processing and traditional crafts. (MP Youth Policy 2023) For urban youth, the focus is on labor-intensive industries and MSME development. The policy also fosters entrepreneurship by establishing Youth Innovation Funds and supporting social enterprises with provisions for venture capital. Additionally, it aims to ensure better access to social security for gig economy workers through platforms like the Youth Portal. Skill development centers and district-level employment counseling will further assist youth in finding job opportunities and building their entrepreneurial ventures.

In terms of Health, the policy adopts a comprehensive approach to youth well-being, integrating both physical and mental health. Programs like the 'Umang School Health and Wellness Program' focus on preventative healthcare and integrating health topics such as nutrition, mental health, and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) into school curricula. Awareness campaigns targeting issues like malnutrition and menstrual hygiene are part of the policy's outreach efforts. Additionally, the policy emphasizes the importance of wellness programs, mental health services, and substance abuse prevention. (MP Youth Policy 2023) The expansion of Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs) and improvements to healthcare infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, ensure that young people have access to necessary health services.

Youth Leadership and Social Work is another cornerstone of the policy, with flagship programs such as the Chief Minister's Youth Development Program (CMYDP) and

the Chief Minister's Youth Internship Program (CMYIP). These initiatives encourage youth to take on leadership roles through internships, fellowships, and School Apprenticeships. There is a strong focus on engaging marginalized youth in leadership development, ensuring that disadvantaged groups have the support they need to step into positions of influence. (MP Youth Policy 2023) The policy also introduces the Madhya Pradesh State Volunteer Program (MPVP), which offers structured opportunities for youth to engage in social work, governance, and community development. Additionally, the policy strengthens counseling systems, providing youth with access to career guidance, skill-building programs, and social work opportunities through platforms like the Youth Portal.

The Sports and Fitness aims to promote physical well-being by developing sports infrastructure at the panchayat and educational institution levels. The policy also encourages the establishment of sports academies in underdeveloped districts, ensuring that talented youth have access to top-level training. (MP Youth Policy 2023) The 'Sports Talent Search Portal' facilitates the identification and nurturing of sports talent, offering pathways for careers in sports management and journalism. Special initiatives for para-athletes, including scholarships and competitions, promote inclusivity in sports. Furthermore, the policy encourages the inclusion of athletes in sports administration, ensuring their participation in decision-making and as role models for the next generation.

In Art and Culture, the policy recognizes the importance of preserving traditional knowledge systems and promoting youth engagement in cultural activities. To achieve this, the policy proposes the creation of a digital repository for traditional knowledge, as well as the establishment of an Art and Culture University to provide formal education in the arts. The integration of cultural heritage into school curricula sensitizes young people to traditional practices. Local artists, especially in rural areas, are supported through initiatives like the Chief Minister Clay Art Scheme, which empowers them economically. (MP Youth Policy 2023) Furthermore, platforms for local artists to showcase their work, including government cultural events and tourism initiatives, are promoted. The policy also advocates for the use of social media by artists, and it establishes cultural incubation centers in colleges to nurture emerging talent.

Environmental Protection is addressed through both awareness initiatives and practical measures aimed at involving youth in sustainability efforts. Programs like the Chief Minister's Climate Change PhD Scholarship support youth research on climate change, while the promotion of green employment in renewable energy and organic farming creates sustainable career opportunities (MP Youth Policy 2023). The policy ensures that Environmental Studies are included in higher education curricula and promotes sustainable practices through nature camps, eco-friendly leadership programs, and youth involvement in projects like the Ankur Campaign and green ward developments. These efforts collectively aim to foster a

generation of environmentally-conscious youth who are equipped to contribute to the state's green agenda.

The Inclusion and Equality focus area underpins the policy's commitment to creating an equitable society. Programs such as the Early Childhood Sensitization Programme (ECSP) aim to instill respect for girls and women from an early age, while also addressing issues like gender discrimination, disability, and transgender rights. The policy advocates for a harassment-free environment in homes, workplaces, and public spaces (MP Youth Policy 2023). It also promotes the inclusion of differently-abled and transgender individuals in education by providing Braille books and text-to-speech software, a facilitating better enforcement of inclusive education laws. Additionally, the empowerment of women is supported through initiatives that promote home-based enterprises along with provisions under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and the Madhya Pradesh Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act. This focus area fosters a spirit of equality, aiming to create a harmonious society where all individuals, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to thrive.

Proposed implementation plan

To ensure the effective implementation of these initiatives, the policy outlines a robust institutional framework that is yet to be fully established. It envisions the creation of the State Youth Advisory Council, which would be chaired by the Chief Minister to provide oversight and strategic guidance. Additionally, the policy proposes the formation of district-level Youth Advisory Councils and Youth Resource Centers to ensure localized execution of youth programs. While these structures have not yet been formally set up, their inclusion in the policy underscores the commitment to decentralized and effective youth development. The policy also calls for the introduction of a dedicated 'Youth Budget' to secure financial resources for these initiatives. Furthermore, the establishment of the Madhya Pradesh Youth Welfare Index is intended to track and assess the progress of youth development efforts (MP Youth Policy 2023). These proposed institutions and mechanisms will play a crucial role in realizing the vision of youth empowerment once implemented.

This comprehensive framework aims to transform the demographic advantage of Madhya Pradesh's youth into tangible socio-economic benefits. By aligning traditional values with modern aspirations, the policy ensures that the youth of Madhya Pradesh are empowered to contribute to sustainable growth, social harmony, and economic development.

3.3.4. Challenges in the Implementation of the Madhya Pradesh Youth Policy

The Youth Policy of Madhya Pradesh, introduced in 2023, emerged as a promising blueprint aimed at empowering the state's youth. Rooted in extensive consultations, the policy engaged over 10,000 young individuals, reflecting their diverse aspirations and challenges. This collaborative approach set the policy apart, reflecting a genuine commitment to include voices from various regions and social backgrounds. With a foundation of inclusivity, the policy was poised to address the core

issues faced by the youth and seemed set to make a significant impact. However, as a recently introduced policy, it is still in its initial phases of implementation. Some early challenges include adapting to the recent transition in political leadership following the state elections, along with the need to strengthen resource allocation, enhance coordination among stakeholders and foster meaningful engagement of youth across rural and urban areas.

Many provisions like the proposed implementation plans and budgetary provisions like a dedicated 'Youth Budget' are still ideas in process. As with any large-scale policy, these hurdles are common and may take time to resolve. The policy holds potential and over time, it is hoped that the state will develop the necessary frameworks, coordination, and funding to make these provisions a reality. The road ahead involves not just time but also deliberate action to ensure the policy can truly benefit the youth it is designed to serve.

One of the most pressing issues is limited awareness. Despite the inclusive consultations, many key stakeholders and young people themselves are not fully informed of the policy's existence. As one of the stakeholders, an expert from an international development agency noted, "Unless someone actively searches for it, they might not even know it exists." This gap in awareness points to the need for stronger outreach and clear communication as even a well-intentioned policy may fall short of its impact if it isn't widely known among those it aims to serve. The next challenge lies in implementation. While specific directives were given to encourage collaboration among various departments, the coordination is still in the process of taking shape. Departments such as Education, Women and Child Development, and Healthcare are yet to fully align their efforts with the objectives of the Youth Policy. As a result, there have been some delays in translating youth-focused initiatives into actionable plans. Strengthening interdepartmental coordination will be essential to ensure the policy achieves a cohesive, and meaningful impact on youth development across the state.

A limitation in available resources has also affected the pace of policy's progress. During the drafting phase, there was a proposal to introduce a dedicated "youth budget," similar to allocations for gender or children's programs. However, this provision is yet to be fully materialized. In the absence of adequate funding, crucial programs for education, skill-building, and employment face challenges. This may contribute to a continued gap in opportunities between urban and rural youth highlighting the need for more targeted investment. For young women, the challenges are even greater. Safety concerns, especially in rural areas, prevent families from allowing their daughters to travel for educational and professional training. A lack of affordable hostels and transportation services further complicates access to these opportunities. Financial constraints and the absence of support services add to these barriers, making it harder for young women from rural backgrounds to pursue their educational and career ambitions.

The policy currently gives limited attention to some emerging issues that are critical to the current youth

landscape. Mental health needs, which are increasingly recognized as essential, receive relatively little focus in the existing policy framework. Similarly, the digital divide continues to impact youth in rural areas, where internet access and digital literacy remain limited. Addressing these evolving needs will be essential to make sure the policy remains responsive and relevant to the realities faced by today's youth. While the initial consultation phase commendably included youth voices, their involvement in ongoing implementation has so far been limited. Sustained engagement with youth is important to ensure the policy continues to reflect their evolving needs and aspirations. As one stakeholder observed, "Effective implementation requires not just initial consultation but continuous collaboration." Enhancing youth participation in later stages of the policy process would help maintain its relevance and responsiveness over time. Finally, the absence of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism limits the policy's ability to adapt over time. For any youth policy to remain effective regular assessments and updates are essential to stay aligned with evolving challenges and demands. Without a structured feedback loop, the policy risks becoming outdated and or disconnected young people face, particularly in areas like mental health and employment trends.

In summary, the Youth Policy of Madhya Pradesh is built on a strong foundation of inclusivity and consultation. However, as a relatively new policy, it faces a range of interconnected challenges that slow its translation from vision to action limited awareness affects engagement, implementation gaps hinder progress, funding constraints limit reach the absence of monitoring mechanism reduces adaptability. Yet, with sustained effort, continued collaboration, and the gradual development of supportive structures, the policy holds significant potential e to empower Madhya Pradesh's youth, to help them access the opportunities they need to thrive.

"Just as we have gender and child budgets, the idea of a dedicated youth budget was proposed, with the understanding that 20% of the state's 3.62 lakh crore budget would support youth related programs. While the specific provision is yet to be clearly outlined, this intent marks a significant step toward prioritizing youth in the state's development agenda." - marked by an **Economic Advisor**.

"Many girls face restrictions on mobility, as they are not allowed to leave their homes. In addition to this, affordability is a major barrier- the financial cost of education or skills training often prevents them from pursuing such opportunities." - noted an **international development agency expert**.

3.4 Analysis of State Youth Policies

3.4.1 Current Status of State Youth Policies

3.4.1.1 Overview of State Policies

Currently, several states in India have implemented state youth policies, while others are in various stages

of drafting or reviewing them. Among the 28 states, approximately 10 states have operational youth policies, while the remaining are either in draft form or under development.

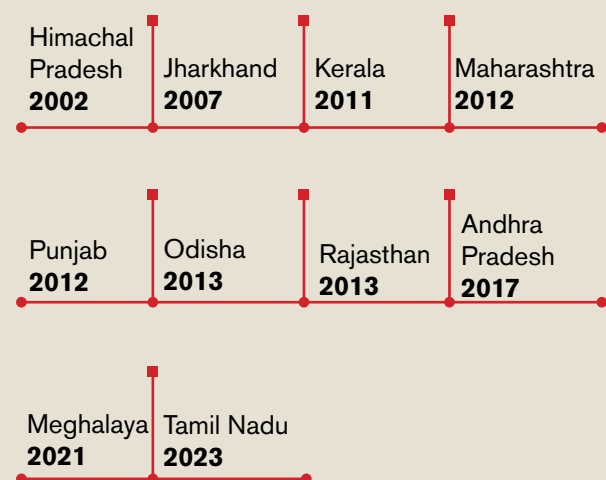
3.4.1.2 States with Implemented Policies

States with implemented youth policies include:

- Andhra Pradesh:** Adopted a youth policy in 2017, focusing on youth participation in state development.
- Himachal Pradesh:** Introduced its youth policy in 2002, with an emphasis on education, employment, and environment.
- Jharkhand:** Implemented a youth policy in 2007, focusing on the holistic development of youth.
- Kerala:** Known for its progressive social policies, Kerala's youth policy, enacted in 2011, focuses on education, gender equality, and skill development.
- Maharashtra:** Adopted a youth policy in 2012, with strong initiatives in education, livelihood, and participation.
- Meghalaya:** Introduced a youth policy in 2021, focusing on skill development and creativity.
- Odisha:** Adopted a youth policy in 2013 with an emphasis on gender equality.
- Punjab:** The youth policy, formulated in 2012, prioritizes employment, sports, and cultural participation.
- Rajasthan:** Introduced in 2013, this policy targets education, self-employment, and sports.
- Tamil Nadu:** Adopted a youth policy in 2023, focusing on education, culture, natural and social sciences, and communication.

Many of the remaining 18 states are still in the process of drafting their policies. For instance, Arunachal Pradesh has its policy in draft form, awaiting formal implementation.

Fig 13: States with Implemented Policies



3.4.2 State-wise Policy Analysis

3.4.2.1 Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh, known for its mountainous terrain and vibrant cultural heritage, has a population exceeding 7 million, with over 35% categorized as youth (ages 13-35).

(Himachal Pradesh Government, 2018) The state's rural areas continue to dominate its demographic landscape, with a significant youth population residing in these regions. While the state has made strides in literacy and overall development, challenges such as unemployment, migration for education and jobs, and limited resources in rural areas persist, making the youth a critical focus of development efforts. The Himachal Pradesh State Youth Policy 2002, drawing from the National Youth Policy, is designed to address these challenges. Its primary aim is to create an environment where youth can actively participate in the state's socio-economic and cultural development. The policy focuses on empowering youth through education, skill development, employment opportunities, and leadership initiatives. Key objectives include fostering gender justice, promoting self-employment, ensuring access to health services (including reproductive health), and reducing substance abuse. (Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2002). The policy targets specific groups, prioritizing adolescents (13-19 years) and young adults (20-35 years), with special emphasis on rural youth, unemployed youth, women, and marginalized communities, including tribal populations and individuals with disabilities. (Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2002). The main areas of concern highlighted in the policy include education and training, employment, health, youth empowerment, gender equality, environment conservation, drug abuse prevention, sports, art and culture, science and technology and civic engagement. By focusing on these areas, the policy aims to ensure holistic development and meaningful participation of youth in shaping the future of Himachal Pradesh.

3.4.2.2 Maharashtra

Maharashtra, the second most populous state in India, is home to over 112 million people. (Maharashtra Population Sex Ratio in Maharashtra Literacy Rate Data 2011-2021, n.d.) The state is known for its significant urban-rural divide, with major cities like Mumbai and Pune serving as economic hubs, while vast rural areas depend on agriculture and allied sectors. Maharashtra has a diverse demographic composition, with a young population making up a considerable portion. The state has been a key contributor to India's economic growth, and its youth, representing a wide range of backgrounds, play a crucial role in various sectors including business, education, and the creative arts. The Maharashtra State Youth Policy draws inspiration from the National Youth Policy 2014. The policy emphasizes creating opportunities and empowering youth to actively participate in Maharashtra's socio-economic progress. The primary goals include enhancing education, employment, health, and skill development, with a focus on fostering leadership, promoting gender equality, and encouraging youth to contribute meaningfully to the state's overall development. (Government of Maharashtra, 2012) The policy targets youth between the ages of 13 and 35, aligning with the definition provided by the National Youth Policy. Adolescents aged 13-19 are given special focus, alongside young adults aged 20-35. The policy addresses the needs of various youth groups, including tribal populations, rural youth, the urban underprivileged, and those engaged in agriculture,

ensuring that marginalized communities are considered in policy planning. (Government of Maharashtra, 2012) A strong focus is placed on addressing the challenges faced by youth in urban slums, highly educated but unemployed youth, and those in economically disadvantaged areas. Key areas of concern addressed by the policy include education and higher education, employment and self-employment, environmental protection, and the development of arts and culture. Additionally, it focuses on training and skill development, health and lifestyle, and social security. The policy also emphasizes the importance of adolescent care, sports and entertainment, science, and technology, and the establishment of a youth social credit index to measure and enhance youth engagement and contributions.

3.4.2.3 Meghalaya

Meghalaya, with a population of approximately 38.16 lakhs, holds a predominantly youthful demographic, with over 70% of its population being under the age of 35. (Meghalaya Population Sex Ratio in Meghalaya Literacy Rate Data 2011-2021, n.d.) The state recognizes the vital role that its youth play in the development and progress of society. Given this, the Government of Meghalaya formulated its Youth Policy in 2021 with a vision to empower young people to become active, responsible, and engaged citizens who contribute meaningfully to the state's socio-economic growth. Drawing on the National Youth Policy framework, this policy aims to address the specific needs and aspirations of the youth of Meghalaya, providing them with opportunities to grow in an enabling environment. The policy's objectives are focused on fostering commitment among youth to the values enshrined in the Constitution, promoting environmental protection, ensuring access to quality education and employment opportunities, and encouraging gender equality and social inclusion. The target group for this policy includes individuals aged 15-29 years, who make up 30.6% of the state's population. However, the policy takes a broader view by also considering the needs of children aged 5-14 years, thus including a wider age group of 5-29 years, which constitutes 54.8% of the state's population. (Government of Meghalaya, 2021) The policy addresses the diverse categories of youth in the state, rural and urban, males and females, ethnic and religious minorities, also including those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, differently-abled, and vulnerable, ensuring that no group is left behind. Meghalaya's Youth Policy identifies several priority areas for intervention, including child development, education, health and well-being, skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship. The policy also emphasizes the importance of promoting arts and culture, sports, leadership, inclusion, and environmental consciousness among the youth. These thrust areas are designed to address the unique challenges faced by young people in Meghalaya and create a framework for their holistic development. (Government of Meghalaya, 2021) The policy aims to create a multiplier effect, where investment in one area—such as education—leads to positive outcomes in other areas, such as employment and health. This policy further discusses the current situation in the state and the future imperatives for each of its thrust areas.

3.4.2.4 Jharkhand

Jharkhand, with its population of around 32 million, is characterized by a significant youthful demographic, with nearly 70% of Jharkhand's population being under 35 years old. (Jharkhand Population Sex Ratio in Jharkhand Literacy Rate Data 2011-2021, n.d.) The state grapples with disparities between urban and rural areas, especially in remote and tribal regions, shaping its youth development priorities. Drawing from the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 and NYP 2021, Jharkhand's Youth Development Policy aims to address these challenges comprehensively. The policy's primary objectives are to enhance educational access, boost employability, and improve the overall well-being of young people. It seeks to align with national goals while tailoring strategies to the state's unique context. (Jharkhand Youth Policy 2007). Targeting educationally disadvantaged youth, unemployed individuals, and marginalized communities, the policy places a special focus on integrating traditional tribal knowledge with modern development practices. This approach ensures respect for cultural heritage while fostering contemporary growth. Key areas of concern addressed by the policy include improving the quality of education, expanding skill development programs, creating job opportunities, and enhancing healthcare services, including mental health support. The policy also emphasizes youth involvement in leadership and decision-making, aiming to foster active participation and representation. A distinctive aspect of Jharkhand's policy is its commitment to equitable development, ensuring that even the most isolated regions receive attention and resources. (Jharkhand Youth Policy 2007). This focus highlights the state's dedication to providing opportunities for all youth, bridging the gap between urban and rural development, and supporting a diverse and inclusive growth trajectory.

3.4.2.5 Kerala

Kerala, known for its high literacy rates and impressive Human Development Index, is a state in southern India with a diverse population of approximately 33 million. (Kerala Population Sex Ratio in Kerala Literacy Rate Data 2011-2019, 2011) The youth demographic, defined as those aged 13-35, constitutes about 41.8% of the state's population, reflecting a substantial segment of its societal framework. The Kerala Youth Policy 2011 draws from the National Youth Policy 2003 to address specific regional needs and conditions. It emphasizes the holistic development of youth by ensuring that youth policy addresses all aspects of life, from physical to spiritual needs. The policy aims to position Kerala as a leading state in human capital development, focusing on youth as central to social, economic, and technological advancement. It seeks to involve youth in all facets of state development, enhancing their role in societal progress. (Kerala State Youth Policy, 2011). The policy targets various youth sub-groups, including rural youth, urban slum dwellers, migrant workers, students, non-student youth, tribal populations, and young women. Special attention is given to disadvantaged groups such as those at risk, victims of abuse, and differently-abled youth. A notable feature of the policy is its emphasis on integrating youth

into the development process at all levels, encouraging their involvement in planning and implementation. Key areas of concern under the policy include education, livelihood promotion, employment and entrepreneurship, vocational training, sports, health (with a focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health), environmental issues, recreational activities, suicide, alcoholism, youth in conflict with the law, career counseling, gender justice, and youth participation. (Kerala State Youth Policy, 2011)

3.4.3 Comparative Analysis

To effectively assess the impact of youth policies across different Indian states, we will conduct a detailed comparative analysis of initiatives from five selected states: Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, and Kerala. This analysis aims to highlight the variations in approach, implementation strategies, budget allocations, and monitoring mechanisms that each state employs in addressing the challenges faced by their youth. By focusing on these states, we can gain insights into diverse methodologies and identify best practices that can be adopted more widely.

The analysis will begin by cataloging the prominent youth development initiatives implemented in each state under their respective policies. This examination will illuminate the focal areas and innovative strategies pursued, showcasing how different states prioritize issues such as education, employment, health, and social inclusion. Following this, we will delve into the implementation strategies that govern these initiatives. Understanding the administrative structures and the agencies involved will provide clarity on how effectively these policies are operationalized, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of each state's approach. Budgetary allocations are another critical aspect of policy effectiveness. Our comparative analysis will include data on the financial commitments made by each state towards youth development, enabling us to evaluate the prioritization of youth issues in state budgets. By examining how funds are allocated and utilized, we can gain insights into the level of seriousness with which these states treat youth development as a priority.

Finally, effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks are essential for assessing the impact of these policies. The analysis will encompass the monitoring bodies involved and the evaluation mechanisms each state employs to track progress and make necessary adjustments. By focusing on these elements, we will create a comprehensive table that serves as a resource for understanding the multifaceted approaches states take in promoting youth development. This structured comparison will facilitate discussions on best practices and highlight areas that require further attention and improvement.

Table 8: List of Target Age Group, Vision and Priority Sector of NYP of States

State	Himachal Pradesh	Maharashtra	Meghalaya	Jharkhand	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh
Year of Policy	2002	2012	2021	2007	2011	2023
Age Group Targeted	13-35 years	13-35 years	15-29 years	10-30 years	13-35 years	15-29 years
Vision	Empowering youth to realize their potential and actively participate in national development through a coordinated approach involving youth, society, government, and NGOs.	To empower youth by providing equal opportunities for education, employment, personal development, and social integration, while fostering responsible citizenship and participation in the state's development process.	To create a sustainable, dynamic, secure, peaceful, and prosperous future for the youth of Meghalaya.	To empower youth by fostering physical, mental, and social well-being through affordable, equitable, and gender-sensitive processes. The policy emphasizes transparency, accountability, and community participation to create a society where youth lead productive lives and contribute to national progress.	To ensure holistic youth development, empowering them to be physically, mentally, economically, and spiritually self-reliant, while contributing to the socio-economic and cultural progress of Kerala	The vision is to empower the youth of Madhya Pradesh to fully realize their potential so that they can make a significant contribution to the economic and social development of the state.
Priority Sectors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education and Training 2. Youth Employment 3. Health and Population 4. Youth Empowerment 5. Gender Justice 6. Environment 7. Drug Abuse 8. Recreation, Sports, & Leisure 9. Art and Culture 10. Science and Technology 11. Civics and Citizenship 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education and Higher Education 2. Employment and Self-Employment 3. Environment Protection 4. Art and Culture 5. Citizenship 6. Adolescence/Teenage Training & Skill Devpt. 7. Health and Lifestyle 8. Sport and Entertainment 9. Science and Technology 10. Social Security 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child Development 2. Education 3. Health and Well-being 4. Skill Development, Employment, and Entrepreneurship 5. Leadership, Inclusion, and Engagement 6. Art and Culture 7. Environmentally Conscious and Social Responsibility 8. Supporting both agricultural and non-farm sectors 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education 2. Employment and Livelihood 3. Health 4. Arts, Culture, and Sports 5. Youth Empowerment and Participation 6. Institutional Capacity Building 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education 2. Livelihood Promotion 3. Employment and Entrepreneurship Devpt 4. Employability 5. Vocational Training and Skill Development 6. Multi-skilling 7. Sports 8. Youth Health and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health 9. Environment 10. Alcoholism 11. Recreation and Leisure-time activities 12. Suicide 13. Gender Justice and Inequality 14. Youth Participation 15. Youth in Conflict with Law 16. Human Rights & Social Justice 17. Counseling, especially career counseling 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Education and Skills Development 2.Employment and Entrepreneurship 3.Health 4.Youth Leadership and Social Work 5.Sports and Fitness 6. Art and Culture 7. Environmental Protection 8. Inclusion and Equality

Table 9: List of Indian States Youth Policy Initiatives, Implementation, Budget, Monitoring, and Evaluation						
State	Himachal Pradesh	Maharashtra	Meghalaya	Jharkhand	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh
1. Broad Initiatives						
A. Key initiatives and programs under each state's youth policy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rajiv Gandhi Swarozgar Yojana Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam Nodal yuva scheme Mukhyamantri Swavalamban Yojana(MSY) Har ghar pathshala Nerhu Yuva Kendra Mukhya Mantri Sukh Shiksha Yojana 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maharashtra Youth For Climate Action (MYCA) Annasaheb patil arthik magas Vikas mahamandal maryadit Chief Minister's employment Guarantee Programme (CMEGP) Mukhya Mantri Yuva Karya Prashikshan Yojana (Chief Minister Youth Work Training Scheme) Mukhya Mantri Yuva Karyaprashikshan Yojana 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> MOTHER (Meghalaya's Outcome based Transformation in Health, Education, nutrition and Rural Development) program Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) National Mental Health Program (NMHP) PRIME (Promotion and Incubation of Market Driven Enterprises) Chief Minister's Youth Development Scheme (CMYDS) Intensive Sports and Youth Development Programme (ISYDP) Intensive Arts and Culture Development Programme (I.A.C.D.P.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mukhyamantri Rojgar Srijan Yojana Chief Minister Employment Generation Scheme Scheme Of Coaching & Allied For Scheduled Castes Swami Vivekananda Nishakta Swavlamban Protsahan Yojana Attracting & Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) Scheme 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Keralotsavam Youth clubs : The clubs covered under this scheme are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Flat Club Agriculture Clubs Youth and Yuva Clubs, Avalidam (Yuvathi Clubs) 'YES' Clubs Marivil Clubs (Transgender) Team Kerala Additional Skill Acquisition Programme (ASAP) Kerala Academy for Skills Excellence (KASE) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mukhyamantri Jan Seva Mitra Yojana Madhya Pradesh State Skill Development Mission Udyam Kranti Yojana Mukhya Mantri Apprenticeship Scheme Ma Tuihe Pranam Yojana Devaranya Yojana CM Youth Internship Program
2. Implementation						
A. Action plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of a State Vidhan Sabha Committee to review youth programs Establishment of a State Youth Commission/Council with statutory powers Creation of a State Youth Board to discuss, design, and deliver youth development initiatives Strengthening of the Department of Youth Services & Sports as the nodal agency 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Training Centres: Action plans for establishing these centres include leadership training, personality development, and modern skills education for youth in every district under state supervision. Competitive Exam Guidance Centres: Establishment of district-level competitive exam guidance centres to support youth in preparing for exams and securing jobs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conversion of Anganwadi Centres into full-fledged early childhood care and learning centres Systematic expansion of higher and technical education infrastructure Infrastructure upgradation at all government primary and secondary educational institutions Upgradation of physical infrastructure at all 659 Health Centres 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish District Youth Advisory Committees to oversee youth development programs and provide planning and implementation guidance at the district level. Develop Vocational Training Institutions at the block level to focus on employable skills such as telecommunications, hospitality, IT, and agro-based industries. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Livelihood Resource Centres to train young people in entrepreneurship, market analysis, and livelihood schemes at the panchayat level. These centres focus on making youth self-reliant and providing targeted training for employment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of a State Youth Advisory Council under the Chief Minister for policy coordination and implementation. Establishment of District Youth Advisory Councils for local-level planning and execution. Creation of Youth Resource Centers at the district level for training, guidance, and social audits.

Table 9: List of Indian States Youth Policy Initiatives, Implementation, Budget, Monitoring, and Evaluation

State	Himachal Pradesh	Maharashtra	Meghalaya	Jharkhand	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh
A. Action plans (contd..)	<p>7. Formulation and strengthening of voluntary youth groups/youth clubs at village level</p> <p>8. Implementation of National Service Volunteer scheme for information dissemination</p> <p>9. Introduction of new programs under Swami Vivekananda Yuva Protasahan Yojna (SVYPS)</p>	<p>3. Yuva Mitra Appointment: Youth representatives, called Yuva Mitra, are appointed at Taluka and District levels to coordinate between youth clubs and increase youth participation in administrative tasks.</p> <p>4. Youth Awards and Youth Festivals: Award schemes for youth at the district and state levels, along with the organization of state-wide youth festivals to identify and promote talent.</p>	<p>5. Establishment of PRIME Hubs across the State</p> <p>6. Development of a digital State Skills Registry</p> <p>7. Setting up district level talent identification committees for sports</p> <p>8. Creation of digital platforms for youth engagement</p>	<p>3. Promote the creation of Livelihood Opportunities in rural areas through agriculture diversification, handicrafts, horticulture, and animal husbandry.</p> <p>4. Health Initiatives: Address malnutrition and anemia through mass screening and provide youth-friendly healthcare services, including curative care and reproductive health education.</p>	<p>2. Develop a Skill Development Mission, with a particular focus on providing employability skills and vocational training to address Kerala's unemployment problem.</p> <p>3. Form a Youth Development Fund to support youth initiatives at the state level.</p> <p>4. Promote the formation of youth clubs and Pan-chayat-level Programs that engage young people in volunteering and social welfare activities. This aims to increase their involvement in community service and government programs.</p> <p>5. Implement Mental Health Initiatives in coordination with the education, health, and youth affairs departments, addressing the growing need for mental health services and counseling.</p>	<p>4. Development of a Youth Welfare Index to monitor progress in youth development initiatives.</p> <p>5. Introduction of digital platforms for youth engagement, including a State Youth Portal for opportunities like internships, training, and jobs.</p>
B. Timelines	<p>Review and revision of the State Youth Policy every five years from the date of first adoption. (However no review has taken place so far.)</p>	<p>The period of this State Youth Policy is decided for next 10 years from the date of announcement of this policy. To take midterm review of achievement of various goals, review Committee will be formed after five years.</p>	<p>Education Infrastructure Upgradation: Upgrading government primary and secondary schools' infrastructure to be completed within three years.</p> <p>PRIME Hubs: Establishment of 15 additional PRIME Hubs within the year.</p>	<p>Annual Reporting: The policy outlines that the Department of Art, Culture, Sports, and Youth Affairs will submit an annual report on policy implementation to the cabinet.</p>	<p>The policy calls for an evaluation cycle every six months, ensuring that progress is regularly assessed and challenges are addressed in a timely manner.</p> <p>A comprehensive review of the youth policy is mandated to occur every five years.</p>	<p>Regular review and updates to the policy based on emerging challenges and feedback.</p> <p>Implementation milestones for schemes and programs monitored annually.</p>

Table 9: List of Indian States Youth Policy Initiatives, Implementation, Budget, Monitoring, and Evaluation						
State	Himachal Pradesh	Maharashtra	Meghalaya	Jharkhand	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh
3. Budgetary Allocation						
A. Compare budget allocation (Youth budget) for youth development.	No proper youth budget available or mentioned	No proper youth budget available or mentioned	No proper youth budget available or mentioned	No proper youth budget available or mentioned	No proper youth budget available or mentioned. An amount of Rs.135.75 Cr has been earmarked for various schemes of the Sports & Youth Affairs Department in the 2023-2024 budget.	
4. Monitoring & Evaluation						
A. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks for each state.	The policy does not outline a specific M&E framework but mentions several monitoring mechanisms: 1. State Vidhan Sabha Committee to review all programs for young people 2. State Youth Commission/Council with statutory powers for oversight 3. State Youth Board to discuss, design, and deliver youth development initiatives 4. Department of Youth Services & Sports as the nodal agency for monitoring and review	1. Youth Commission: The State Youth Commission will oversee the monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of youth development programs under the policy. 2. Youth Social Credit Index: A Youth Social Credit Index is introduced to assess youth participation in social work, which will be used to evaluate their contributions and provide recognition.	1. A monitoring and evaluation framework to be developed to track progress of interventions/programmes/schemes under each thrust area 2. Key performance indicators to be regularly generated by data collection, compilation and analysis by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs 3. Evaluation of programs to be undertaken through credible agencies once every two years	A State Youth Resource Centre will be established to monitor and advocate for youth issues, coordinate with various stakeholders, and promote convergence between government and non-government youth programs. District Youth Advisory Committees will monitor the progress of youth programs at the district level and report to the state.	The State Level Core Committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the youth policy. This includes regular data collection, analysis, and the presentation of findings for ongoing improvements.	The proposed frameworks include: Madhya Pradesh Youth Welfare Index: to track youth development indicators. Institutional mechanisms like the State Youth Advisory Council and Youth Resource Centers to ensure oversight and coordination. Social Audits of youth-related schemes conducted regularly. Impact assessments through feedback mechanisms and structured reviews.
B. Nodal agencies involved in policy oversight.	Department of Youth Services & Sports, Government of Himachal Pradesh, is the primary nodal agency	Department of Sports & Youth Services	Sports & Youth Affairs Department	Department of Art, Culture, Sports, and Youth Affairs	Department of Youth Affairs	Department of Sports and Youth Welfare, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Table 9: List of Indian States Youth Policy Initiatives, Implementation, Budget, Monitoring, and Evaluation

State	Himachal Pradesh	Maharashtra	Meghalaya	Jharkhand	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh
C. Monitoring bodies involved	It is mentioned in the policy: 1. State Vidhan Sabha Committee 2. State Youth Commission/ Council (proposed) 3. State Youth Board 4. Performance Appraisal Committee for youth clubs But they don't actually exist.	A State Level Coordination Committee and a Standing Committee of Youth Members in the Legislative Assembly are tasked with overseeing policy implementation and control mechanisms	1. High-powered committee chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister 2. Implementation committee chaired by the Chief Secretary	A Coordination Committee under the Department of Art, Culture, Sports, and Youth Affairs will be established	STATED IN THE POLICY : The policy includes a State Level Coordination Committee that monitors the implementation of youth programs, with further oversight by district, block, and panchayat-level committees. These bodies work together to ensure smooth implementation across all regions	STATED IN THE POLICY: State Youth Advisory Council and District Youth Advisory Councils. Inclusion of National and State Youth Award recipients in advisory committees.
D. Policy Review mechanisms such as databases, dashboards, periodic meetings, and public reporting of outcomes.	The state policies don't talk about any policy review mechanisms.	Dashboard for : Government of Maharashtra Skills, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Department	The state policies don't talk about any policy review mechanisms.	The state policies don't talk about any policy review mechanisms.	Has established a state youth commission and youth welfare board, and their dashboards	Regular reviews and updates based on feedback and youth welfare index outcomes. No mention of dashboards or databases for public reporting.
E. Impact Assessment	The policy does not explicitly mention impact assessment methodologies.	The policy does not explicitly mention impact assessment methodologies.	The policy mentions that evaluation of various programs will be undertaken through credible agencies once every two years, which could serve as a form of impact assessment. Evaluation findings are used for recalibrating programs, but no specific databases or public reporting mechanisms are mentioned.	The policy mentioned that Evaluation of youth development progress will be conducted through state and district committees to track the effectiveness of programs and suggest necessary adjustments.	The policy mentioned that evaluation is to be carried out periodically to analyze setbacks and performance, with adjustments made to improve program effectiveness	Not explicitly detailed, but the Youth Welfare Index to be served as a basis for evaluating outcomes.

While each state has tailored its policy to address specific local needs, the analysis reveals key differences in how these policies are structured, executed, and time-framed. Himachal Pradesh's youth policy, established in 2002, has made significant strides in youth development, particularly in education and health. The state's educational initiatives, including special scholarships and the Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar Vidyarthi Rin Yojna offering low-interest loans for higher education, have contributed to a high GER of 94.1% in secondary schools. Its efforts to modernize infrastructure, such as smart classrooms and digital devices, have strengthened its educational framework, making Himachal a leader in youth education. Additionally, Himachal leads the Youth Health Index (YHI) with a score of 0.778, benefiting from low obesity rates and a lower prevalence of anemia. These outcomes are driven by a robust healthcare system and effective youth health programs. However, the policy needs modernization to address emerging challenges like digital literacy and technology integration. Madhya Pradesh can leverage insights from Himachal Pradesh focus on education, particularly the successful initiatives for girls and scholarships. In health, Himachal's approach to tackling obesity and anemia offers a model for MP, which faces higher rates of these issues. While Himachal excels in education and health, MP's youth policy is more holistic, incorporating contemporary issues like climate change, digital literacy, and youth-led environmental initiatives. MP can improve its health outcomes, particularly in combating obesity and anemia, to match Himachal's success.

Maharashtra's youth policy stands out for its innovative approaches, such as the Youth Social Credit Index to track youth participation and a strong focus on climate action through MYCA. The state's emphasis on urban-rural integration, coupled with district-level initiatives like Yuva Mitra, showcases a structured framework for youth development. However, the policy lacks specific budget allocations for youth initiatives, and there's a gap between policy design and implementation. Maharashtra ranks second in the Youth Work Index (YWI) with a score of 0.630, highlighting challenges in inclusive youth employment, particularly with a 10.8% youth unemployment rate. Madhya Pradesh can adopt learnings from Maharashtra's integration of climate action in youth programs and the Yuva Mitra initiative for grassroots implementation. While MP excels in addressing modern challenges like digital literacy and youth empowerment, it can strengthen tracking systems for youth participation, a key element of Maharashtra's policy. Additionally, MP can benefit from Maharashtra's urban-rural integration strategies, as the state also struggles with employment challenges, particularly in rural areas.

Kerala's youth policy is marked by its inclusive approach, with programs like Marivil Clubs supporting transgender youth and a robust framework through the Youth Welfare Board. The state's focus on education, with a GER of 97.9% in secondary schools and high literacy rates, has made it a leader in youth education, as reflected in its Youth Education Index (YEI) score of 0.735. Kerala's attention to mental health and youth welfare has contributed to strong performance in the Youth Health Index (YHI), although rising obesity rates are emerging as a concern. The state's

strength lies in its institutional structure and coordination between education and youth affairs, ensuring a well-rounded approach. Madhya Pradesh can draw valuable lessons from Kerala's comprehensive institutional framework and inclusive programs. MP's policy can benefit from Kerala's emphasis on mental health and youth welfare, areas where MP has room to grow. Kerala's focus on gender inclusion, through initiatives like Marivil Clubs, also provides valuable lessons for MP, particularly in its efforts to address gender-based challenges among youth.

Meghalaya's youth policy, introduced in 2021, is a modern response to contemporary challenges, with a clear focus on digital platforms and technological integration. The state's MOTHER program, which addresses multiple youth development aspects, and its Digital State Skills Registry are innovative steps toward comprehensive development. Meghalaya's focus on integrating traditional and modern approaches is unique, and its clear infrastructure development timeline signals long-term progress. With a high score in the Youth Gender Development Index (YGDI) of 1.009, the state demonstrates a strong focus on gender equity. Madhya Pradesh can learn from Meghalaya's use of digital platforms and technology, areas where MP's policy is still evolving. MP can also adopt a more integrated approach to development, as seen in Meghalaya's MOTHER program, which tackles multiple youth issues simultaneously, and its focus on gender equity can guide MP's efforts in this area.

Jharkhand's youth policy focuses on tribal youth development, integrating traditional knowledge with modern skills. The state prioritizes rural livelihood opportunities and vocational training at the block level. Jharkhand's district-level youth advisory committees provide a decentralized approach to implementation. However, the policy suffers from a lack of detailed budgetary information and faces implementation challenges in remote areas. With a lower score of 0.485 in the Youth Development Index (YDI), Jharkhand's youth development efforts are hindered by limited resources and infrastructural gaps. Madhya Pradesh can benefit from Jharkhand's focused approach on tribal youth and rural livelihoods, especially given MP's similar demographic profiles. MP could also benefit from Jharkhand's decentralized approach to youth development, improving implementation in remote areas. However, MP's policy stands out for its broader and more comprehensive scope, addressing emerging issues such as climate change and digital literacy.

In terms of implementation, Himachal Pradesh's youth policy outlines departmental roles but lacks detail steps for execution. In contrast, Kerala and Maharashtra present more structured approaches, with Kerala's district-level committees and Maharashtra's state-wide network of representatives ensuring a stronger foundation for on-ground implementation. Meghalaya and Jharkhand have introduced phased action plans with specific goals, although their practical execution remains a work in progress.

Monitoring and evaluation frameworks remain an area that requires greater attention. While most state policies include provisions for monitoring there is limited, evidence of their operational effectiveness. Himachal Pradesh for instance, has a monitoring mechanism, but there is little

documentation on its functioning. Kerala mentions regular assessments, and Maharashtra proposes biannual evaluations, however consistent follow through appears to be a challenge. Similarly, Meghalaya and Jharkhand show limited documentation of follow-up processes, suggesting a gap between policy design and implementation. Strengthening these frameworks will be key to improving accountability and ensuring intended outcomes. A key issue across all states is the disparity between policy documents and actual implementation. While many policies outline ambitious frameworks, the lack of practical execution and consistent evaluation limits their effectiveness, hindering continuous improvement.

In conclusion, while the newer policies in Meghalaya and Jharkhand align more closely with the evolving needs of youth, they face challenges in implementation and monitoring. Kerala's strong institutional support provides a solid foundation, but accountability and follow-through remain a challenge. To improve, states must prioritize clear, actionable plans, robust monitoring systems, and transparent budget allocations to ensure their youth policies lead to tangible outcomes.





CHAPTER 4

Summary of Findings



CHAPTER 4.1

Insights from Experts

The in-depth interviews provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities surrounding the implementation of the Youth Policy. These conversations, with diverse stakeholders across sectors, revealed critical gaps in awareness, infrastructure, and coordination, highlighting the need for a more targeted and comprehensive approach. While the policy's design reflects forward-thinking initiatives, its execution remains hindered by a lack of awareness, resources, and inter-departmental coordination.

1. Policy Awareness

Despite an extensive consultation process during the policy's formulation, there remains a significant gap in awareness among key stakeholders and the wider public. This disconnect hampers the policy's ability to engage youth effectively over time.

"First of all, it's important to note that there is very little awareness about the youth policy. It hasn't been widely publicized, and without actively seeking it out, many people may simply not be aware of its existence. remarked an **official from an international development agency**.

2. Implementation Framework

While the policy lays out a detailed implementation structure, the absence of clear ownership and accountability mechanisms poses challenges for effective execution. Additionally, the gap between policy design and ground-level implementation may limit its overall impact.

"Implementation requires clear institutional arrangements; otherwise, it's unclear who takes responsibility? When approached departments might respond, 'We were asked to help develop the policy, and we did, but we also have several other priorities to manage' noted an **economic policy advisor**.

3. Resource Innovation

The introduction of youth budgeting, inspired by successful models like gender budgeting, marks a forward-thinking initiative. However, its operationalization has faced significant challenges, limiting its potential to drive impactful outcomes.

"Just like we have dedicated budgets for gender and children, we felt there should be one for youth as well. While the idea was proposed, the specific provision for a youth budget is still awaited." shared an **economic policy advisor**.

4. Gender-Specific Challenges

The policy's approach to gender falls short in addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by young women and girls. The absence of targeted interventions limits its potential to advance gender equity.

"The policy can appear generic if it does not address the specific needs of girls in a meaningful way. When we talk about gender, we usually emphasize two key aspects: the need for targeted interventions and the importance of providing opportunities for girls to voice their choices" pointed out an **international development agency official**.

5. Rural-Urban Divide

Geographic disparities in resource allocation and access to opportunities remain a critical barrier to equitable policy implementation. Rural youth often face stark disadvantages compared to their urban counterparts.

"Different regions require tailored strategies and are entirely different from the work we have to do in the urban setup. Even in areas just 15 kilometers from the capital, youth may not even know about the existence of opportunities." explained a **youth engagement officer**.

6. Mental Health Integration

Mental health, a cornerstone of youth empowerment, remains a neglected aspect within the policy framework. The lack of mental health support undermines the broader goals of youth development.

"There is limited emphasis on mental health. Without addressing mental health, empowerment policies cannot be effective." emphasized a **Health Sector Expert**.

7. Infrastructure Gaps

The absence of adequate physical and institutional infrastructure restricts accessibility to resources and services, particularly for rural and marginalized groups.

"One of the significant challenges we face is infrastructure. For instance, girls struggle to reach district-level ITIs. The lack of safe transportation options or even transportation is a major barrier. Public transportation is inadequate and often unsafe." remarked a **Civil Society Organization Representative**.

Initial cross-departmental engagement during the policy formulation has not translated into sustained collaboration, leading to fragmented implementation efforts.

"In my interactions with various departments, I have rarely come across discussions around the youth policy or its integration with departmental programs. While departments do highlight their initiatives, the youth policy itself seldom features in these conversations." highlighted an **international development agency official**.



CHAPTER 4.2

Key Findings

Youth policy in Madhya Pradesh holds enormous potential, given the sheer size and diversity of the state's young population. For many, youth policy is more than a government mandate; it's a gateway to better education, economic opportunity, and civic engagement that could shape the socio-economic future of the region. Despite this potential, the findings from our research reveal both progress and a range of challenges, highlighting areas where policy impact is limited and where young people still face barriers to realizing their full potential.

1. Limited Visibility and Awareness of the MP Youth Policy (MPYP)

One of the challenges identified is the limited awareness of the MPYP among key stakeholders. While the policy itself is the outcome of an extensive consultation process which engaged over 10,000 youth through district-level consultations, MyGov portal suggestions, and state-wide events, awareness at the implementation stage appears to be uneven. Any implementing agencies are still familiarizing with the policy's provisions. A more structured and sustained approach to information dissemination and awareness building could help bridge the gap between participatory policy-making process and its effective execution.

2. Lack of Enforcement of the Proposed Implementation Framework

The implementation structure of the MPYP faces some early challenges related to coordination and clarity of roles. Stakeholder interviews indicated that there is still some uncertainty around responsibilities, which at times results in overlaps or gaps in service delivery. Although the policy proposed an institutional framework with bodies such as the State Youth Advisory Council under the Chief Minister, District-level Youth Advisory Councils, and Youth Resource Centers- these structures are yet to be operationalized. Developing clear implementation guidelines and establishing institutional mechanisms could significantly strengthen the policy's rollout and impact.

3. Resource Constraints

One recurring concern raised during the project is the lack of a clearly defined youth budget. Stakeholders noted that resource limitations, including inadequate infrastructure and staffing constraints, have significantly affected program implementation. While the MPYP includes a proposal for a 'Youth Budget,' the framework for allocation and financial planning is still evolving. In comparison, states like Himachal Pradesh have introduced more detailed youth budget provisions, such as an allocation of 4,327.44 Crore for 2023-2024, highlighting how dedicated financial planning can enhance policy outcomes.

4. Urban-Rural Divide

The policy would benefit from a stronger rural development lens, to better reflect the unique needs and challenges faced by rural youth. Given that over 60% of MP's population resides in villages, it is important that the policy provisions are tailored to address the realities of rural settings. Strengthening focus on infrastructure, connectivity, and access to quality education and skill development in these areas can help ensure more equitable outcomes and effective implementation across state.

5. Gender-Specific Barriers

The policy would benefit from a more comprehensive gender lens to effectively address the diverse challenges and needs of young men, women, and non-binary individuals. Although gender inclusion is one of the stated objectives, clearer guiding principles and targeted strategies could strengthen its responsiveness to gender specific challenges. Stakeholder feedback suggests that the policy often "treats youth as a homogeneous group, which may overlook the particular barriers faced by young women." Additionally, the limited availability of gender-disaggregated data makes it difficult to track and address these gaps. By incorporating targeted initiatives and a structured framework to monitor gender participation and outcomes, the policy can move closer to ensuring equitable opportunities for all youth.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The absence of an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is another significant issue. Stakeholders noted that the current efforts are largely limited to financial monitoring with limited tools in place for impact assessment or regular feedback. While the policy outlines structures such as the State Youth Advisory Council and the MP Youth Welfare Index to support monitoring, these have not yet been operationalized. In addition, the lack of defined timelines and data collection mechanisms, makes it difficult to track progress or inform improvements. In comparison, states like Maharashtra and Kerala, have more structured monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress and impact, which underlines the importance of establishing clear process to ensure accountability and learning.

In conclusion, while the MP Youth Policy has been designed with significant consultation and promising provisions, its implementation faces several challenges. These include limited awareness, a fragmented structure, resource constraints, rural-urban disparities, gender-specific barriers, and the absence of fully functioning monitoring system. Addressing these gaps is essential for ensuring that the policy can effectively benefit the youth of Madhya Pradesh and support their development in a meaningful way.



CHAPTER 5

Recommendations

1. Launch Comprehensive Awareness Campaigns

Given the limited visibility of the MPYP, it is suggested that a robust state-wide awareness strategy be implemented, leveraging a multi-stakeholder approach. Communication could be targeted through digital platforms, radio, and print media, particularly with a focus on rural areas. It might be beneficial for respective stakeholders in each sector of the policy to take an active role in dissemination. For instance, educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and coaching centers could be encouraged to conduct awareness sessions. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), local NGOs, and youth groups may also be engaged to organize workshops and community outreach programs. Additionally, the establishment of district-level youth information hubs and the development of an MPYP mobile app could help streamline information dissemination and ensure regular updates.

2. Strengthen the Institutional Framework

To address the fragmentation in the implementation of the MPYP, it is suggested that the proposed institutional bodies, such as the State Youth Advisory Council, District Youth Advisory Councils, and Youth Resource Centers, be operationalized within a defined timeline. Stakeholders across sectors could collaborate to ensure these bodies function efficiently, with clear roles and responsibilities. It may also be helpful for implementing agencies to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs), as suggested in one of the interviews, to facilitate inter-departmental coordination and define clear accountability measures. This would streamline the execution process and ensure consistency in implementation across the state.

3. Establish a Dedicated Youth Budget

Given the challenges related to resource allocation, it is suggested that Madhya Pradesh explore the establishment of a dedicated youth budget, similar to the model adopted by other states like Himachal Pradesh. This could involve creating specific budgetary allocations for youth programs, ensuring transparency in fund utilization. Stakeholders could consider working with financial experts and government officials to create a transparent financial reporting system, which includes monitoring mechanisms to track the effective use of resources.

4. Address Rural-Urban Disparities

The MP Youth Policy can significantly benefit from adopting a rural development lens that acknowledges the distinct challenges faced by rural youth. By addressing rural-specific gaps such as inadequate infrastructure, limited digital connectivity, and unequal access to quality education and skill development, the policy can ensure more inclusive and equitable youth development. In this context, the establishment of Youth Resource Centres, as envisaged in the State Youth Policy, should be prioritized by the state government as critical platforms for skilling, future readiness, and bridging urban-rural disparities. These centres can serve as hubs for career guidance, digital literacy, entrepreneurship support, and civic engagement, particularly in underserved rural and tribal regions. Alongside this, targeted interventions in ar-

reas such as agricultural innovation and rural entrepreneurship can further strengthen rural youth agency. Exploring meaningful collaboration with civil society organizations and CSR initiatives will be vital in operationalising these efforts, leveraging grassroots experience, resources, and innovation to ensure sustained impact and wider reach across the state.

5. Adopt a Gender-Sensitive Approach

The MP Youth Policy can integrate a gender-sensitive framework across all its components. This could include setting gender-responsive targets in sectors like education, employment, health, and civic engagement. Consultations for policy formulation and implementation may actively involve diverse women's groups, gender minorities, and youth organizations to ensure their needs are reflected in the policy. The policy could also include gender-disaggregated data collection mechanisms and establish specific targets to measure progress in addressing gender gaps. Regular monitoring and evaluation processes would help to track the effectiveness of gender-sensitive components and assess their impact on young women and girls and other marginalized genders.

6. Implement an Effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework

To ensure that the policy's impact is effectively assessed and improved upon, it is suggested that a robust M&E framework be developed. This could include establishing a youth welfare index, conducting quarterly progress reviews, and setting up a real-time digital dashboard to track program progress. Engaging stakeholders like local government agencies, youth organizations, and sectoral experts could help gather relevant data and insights. These efforts could be complemented by creating feedback loops with implementing agencies to ensure continuous improvement, allowing for quick adjustments to be made when gaps or challenges are identified. Regular impact assessments could provide valuable insights into the policy's effectiveness and areas that require refinement.

7. Lack of Data in the Public Domain

There is a significant gap in the availability of youth-related data in the public domain, which hampers transparency and informed decision-making. We recommend the establishment of robust data collection and management systems specifically for youth-related indicators, with regular updates to ensure transparency and accountability. Creating a centralized public database to display youth development metrics and progress across various indicators will be essential. This would act as a report card, showcasing progress across various metrics and enabling evidence-based policymaking.

8. Weak Interdepartmental Coordination

At present, interdepartmental coordination and communication in Madhya Pradesh remain limited. To address this, we recommend that NITI Aayog take a lead role in monitoring youth development policies by acting as the nodal agency for policy implementation and oversight. Additionally, NITI Aayog could play a key role in developing a Youth Development Index (YDI) specifically for the state of Madhya Pradesh. Establishing clear communication

channels between policy-making bodies and implementing departments would help ensure better alignment and collaboration. Introducing accountability mechanisms would also strengthen policy execution and promote a more cohesive approach across all departments involved in youth development.

9. Strengthen opportunities for cross learning

State officials, in some cases, appears to be hesitant in adopting best practices from other regions. This can sometime limit opportunities for innovation and the replication of successful models. Encouraging cross-state collaboration through formal knowledge-sharing platforms and regular interstate dialogues can foster a more open learning environment. Additionally, documenting and incentivizing best practices can help promote a culture of learning and contribute to stronger policy outcomes.

10. Enhance Policy Localization

Youth policies are frequently designed with a one-size-fits-all approach, disregarding the unique needs and conditions of different states. This limits the relevance and impact of such policies in diverse socio-economic contexts. To address this, state-specific needs assessments can be conducted, and policies can be tailored to local circumstances. Developing state-specific youth development indicators can further ensure that interventions are contextually appropriate and impactful.

11. Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement

Many youth policies fail to reach their full potential due to limited citizen engagement and awareness. Youth and their communities often remain uninformed about the benefits, opportunities, and progress of these policies. Structured communication campaigns, including media outreach and citizen feedback channels, are essential to build awareness and foster participation. Actively involving youth in policy design and implementation processes will enhance ownership and ensure policies address their real needs.

12. Reform Implementation Tracking

The absence of clear metrics and monitoring systems poses significant challenges in evaluating the effectiveness of youth policies. We recommend developing clear, measurable indicators to assess policy success and establishing transparent reporting mechanisms for regular public updates. Periodic reviews and evaluations should be conducted to assess the performance of youth policies, with mechanisms for course correction based on feedback from the implementation process. This will allow for timely adjustments to strategies and ensure the continuous improvement of youth development initiatives.





ANNEXURE

Annexure 1

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