ENGENDERING
THE NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY
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Engendering the national Youth Policy
Foreword

About 27.5 per cent of the Indian population is in the age groups of 15–29 years. We are emerging slated to be the fourth largest economy by 2025. To make this a reality, this youth population must be empowered and their capabilities honed over the coming years. The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 echoes a similar vision. For India to achieve its rightful place in the League of Nations, empowering the youth of the country to achieve their full potential is the key.

Some of the most pertinent challenges faced by youth in our country today are unemployment, discrimination and social exclusion based on gender identities and other factors, and environmental concerns. The National Youth Policy talks in depth about these challenges and incorporates elements to address them through its strategies. Using the framework of the policy, these four Action Plans have been developed by our Ministry with support from the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Volunteers.

Along with national challenges, these plans are also crucial to aligning our work with the international development agenda. In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed upon by members of the United Nations, including India. These goals will shape the world in which young people will make their contribution and also require the contribution of young people to become a reality. These plans collectively, and individually, talk about ensuring youth are at the centre of the development agenda.

A pioneering approach has been brought in to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the NYP 2014 as well as the SDGs. Volunteering has been entwined across all four thematic areas as a realistic and achievable strategy to involve young people in development work. With volunteering as an overarching strategy, all the plans bring to light new issues and strategies in the respective themes. For example, the Action Plan for Social Inclusion – Promoting Social Inclusion of Excluded Youth Groups through Volunteering – talks about the importance of intersectional inclusive practices, while also highlighting the fact that youth themselves are an excluded group in our country. Turn the Tide: Amplifying Social Entrepreneurship through Youth Volunteering, on the other hand, looks at developing the skills of youth to create employment opportunities for themselves and others while addressing pressing social issues through an entrepreneurial lens.

The relevance of volunteering is particularly highlighted in the Action Plan on Engaging Youth Volunteers in Disaster Risk Reduction and Environment Management, where building a cohort of trained youth volunteers is suggested to tackle unexpected disasters in India. Further, in Engendering the National Youth Policy, a strong focus has been to empower the existing voluntary schemes like gender champions and Anganwadi workers under the Integrated Child Development Services scheme to transform existing social norms and behaviours for gender justice and equality.

I am happy that the Ministry is bringing out these Action Plans in these important areas of concern. I hope that the suggested strategies are assimilated into the various other ministries, government agencies and civil society organisations. They can play a vital role in creating a world that is more peaceful, equitable and sustainable than the one we have today.
Message

When the world’s governments adopted the ambitious [Sustainable Development] Agenda 2030 in 2015, it was with the recognition that achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require the participation of all institutions and individuals. The young, especially, are central to this effort. They have the potential to be a positive force for transformational change. India’s 330-million-plus young men and women will be instrumental in helping realise the SDGs.

The UNDP Youth Strategy 2014–17 identifies support to national youth policy development and implementation as a key area of intervention. In India, the project, ‘Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme’, was conceived with the aim of strengthening youth volunteering infrastructure and supporting the implementation of the Government of India’s National Youth Policy 2014.

Under the National Youth Policy 2014, four key areas of intervention have been identified, with many areas of overlap with the SDGs. Action Plans were developed to achieve the objectives of the National Youth Policy 2014 under four key areas: Social Entrepreneurship; Gender Justice and Equality; Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction; and Social Inclusion. While all four Action Plans work towards Goal 1 (No Poverty), the plans also bring focus to other SDGs.

The Action Plan on Social Entrepreneurship looks at the targets of Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). Strategies detailed in the plan suggest facilitating entrepreneurship opportunities for youth in order to build creative, innovative solutions to the most pressing development challenges in India through education and volunteering.

The Action Plan on Gender Justice and Equality provides clear strategies to work towards Goals (Gender Equality) in India. For example, one of the key strategies outlined is to encourage young women to volunteer in their communities, which could help them build skills while also challenging gender inequalities.

Along with an overarching focus on Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), Goal 14 (Life below Water), and Goal 15 (Life on Land), the Action Plan on Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction also addresses some of the targets of Goal 13 (Climate Action), by strategising prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, involving youth volunteers in climate change–related planning, and improving education and awareness about climate change and environmental challenges.

Goal 10 calls for reducing inequalities based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status within a country. The Action Plan on Social Inclusion recognised young people as a marginalised group, laying out a blueprint to effectively approach intersectional marginality due to other factors like sex, disability, caste, ethnicity, religion and others by creating safe spaces for youth and promoting a rights-based approach to youth development.

These four Action Plans together create a strong framework for India to bring together youth volunteers and channel their dynamism and energy towards tackling some of the most pressing national and global development challenges. The Government of India and other stakeholders are already concentrating their efforts to carrying young people along as it seeks to meet these targets. We offer our full support as these Action Plans are implemented.

Mr. Yuri Afanasiev,
UN Resident Coordinator
UNDP Resident Representative, India
Message

Around the world, more than 1 billion people, including many youth, volunteer within and outside their communities. Young people are increasingly acting as agents of change in their communities. Moving from being the beneficiaries of development work, they are leading impactful sustainable development initiatives. The youth are becoming a transformative force for social change and progress in India and around the world.

Volunteerism allows young people a chance to take part in community and national development activities. It gives them a sense of ownership, a chance to understand these issues and their rights, to build character and develop personally. Volunteerism also provides opportunities for youth to interact with other young people, build soft job skills and get a better understanding of employment opportunities they would like to pursue.

While volunteering for development, young people also develop their own skills and talents, and further feed into a pool of skilled professionals creating better opportunities for addressing development goals. This cycle creates a cohort of young people with the potential to change their world and meet development issues head on.

Volunteering has formed part of Indian culture since the very beginning. ‘Society above self’ has been a mantra for the nation, which has helped create some of the largest youth volunteering schemes in the world. Schemes like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and the National Service Scheme reach out to over 11 million young people in the country and promote volunteerism as a tool for sustainable social change. Along with understanding the potential impact of volunteering, there lies an unprecedented opportunity with over 60 per cent of the population, who are under the age of 35.

Volunteering can play an important role in achieving the goals of the National Youth Policy 2014, and also the Sustainable Development Goals. The four Action Plans developed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, UNDP India and UNV India provide concrete and effective strategies to use volunteering for social inclusion, gender justice and equality, social entrepreneurship, and environment and disaster risk reduction.

To tackle these and other development issues, we must focus on volunteering to leave no one behind, including young people. With young volunteers at the centre of development plans, India has the opportunity to pave the way in pioneering youth volunteering models which can be replicated across the world.

Olivier Adam
Executive Coordinator

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 envisages an empowering framework for youth in India to ensure their personal development as well as the development of our country. While considering translating this policy into action, the idea of Action Plans in four selected focus areas of the NYP 2014 was shaped. While the four thematic areas reflected the objectives of the policy, volunteering emerged as an interweaving thread to ensure practical implementation of the strategies under these plans.

These Action Plans have been developed by experts in their fields after multiple consultations with the ministry, government agencies, civil society organisations and, of course, youth themselves. Starting with a consultation on International Volunteer Day (December 5, 2015), an expert group on youth development was identified with members from various government departments like NITI Aayog, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, and many others. The committee also consisted of youth leaders, representatives of youth agencies and organisations, representatives from international organisations like UNDP and UNICEF, and others.

Meanwhile, the individual consultants that were engaged were chosen after careful consideration of their experience and are leaders and experts in their respective fields. Pravah, a leading youth development organisation with more than 20 years of experience, has developed *Turn the Tide: Amplifying Social Entrepreneurship through Youth Volunteering.* Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion, an organization working to promote social inclusion for almost three decades, led *Promoting Social Inclusion of Excluded Youth Groups through Volunteering.* *Engaging Youth Volunteers in Disaster Risk Reduction and Environment Management and Engendering the National Youth Policy* have been created by Ms Ranjini Mukherjee and Ms Leena Patel, respectively, both frontrunners in their fields as well.

Immense effort has been put into the creation of meaningful yet feasible strategies to make the NYP 2014 a reality. While overarching strategies are shared across all four documents, specific strategies keeping in mind relevant ministries, agencies like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme, etc, are also in place. I hope that these Action Plans can be incorporated into the long-term strategies of all concerned stakeholders to ensure that young volunteers are at the forefront of development in India.

(Lalit Kumar Gupta)
Engendering the National Youth Policy 2014 has been developed as an Action Plan for implementation of the National Youth Policy (2014) under ‘Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme’, a joint project between the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, United Nations Development Programme, and United Nations Volunteers.

We thank Ms Leena Patel, the lead consultant for this Action Plan, for her expertise and inputs in the creation of this plan. Discussions with experts in many disciplines have been valuable in the development of this plan, including Ms Annie Namala, Ms Ranjini Mukherjee and Ms Ishani Sen. We thank all members of the Expert Group Committee for Youth Development in 2016 for their valuable insights for this plan.

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We would like to thank Major General (retd) Dilawar Singh, Director General, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), along with other senior staff members of the NYKS including Mr Sunil Malik, Mr M.P. Gupta, Mr Atif Chaudhary, and Mr S.K. Thakur. We also thank Dr Girish Tuteja, former Director, National Service Scheme (NSS), and officials of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development (RGNIYD) for their valuable inputs.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANM</td>
<td>Auxiliary Nurse Midwife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASHA</td>
<td>Accredited Social Health Activists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWC</td>
<td>Anganwadi Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>Central Board of Secondary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DYC</td>
<td>District Youth Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSY</td>
<td>Janani Suraksha Yojana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICDS</td>
<td>Integrated Child Development Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQI</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer [and any other] Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKSP</td>
<td>Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Parpyojana</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoHFW</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoHRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Human Resources and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Rural Development</td>
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<td>MoMA</td>
<td>Ministry of Minority Affairs</td>
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<td>MoWCD</td>
<td>Ministry of Women and Child Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoYAS</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>NABARD</td>
<td>National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<td>NCERT</td>
<td>National Council of Educational Research and Training</td>
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<td>NEUPA</td>
<td>National University of Educational Planning and Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Service Scheme</td>
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<td>NRHM</td>
<td>National Rural Health Mission</td>
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<td>NRLM</td>
<td>National Rural Livelihoods Mission</td>
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<td>NYKS</td>
<td>Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan</td>
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<td>NYP</td>
<td>National Youth Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLHIVs</td>
<td>Persons Living with HIV/AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHG</td>
<td>Self-help Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGSY</td>
<td>Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUTP</td>
<td>Skill Upgradation Training Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAWG</td>
<td>Violence against Women and Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLHIVs</td>
<td>Women Living with HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNV</td>
<td>United Nations Volunteers</td>
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Volunteerism for gender justice and equality is not a new concept. Women and persons identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer [and any other] identity (LGBTQI), have been volunteering for gender justice and equality for many decades, if not longer. Informal support systems by women for women, particularly in instances of violence, have long existed within the women's movement in India. Women's activism promoting gender justice and equality is blurred between the lines of volunteerism, paid work and unpaid work. The same holds true for volunteers who have long been championing LGBTQI rights in India – much of which, like women's rights, is supported by informal systems of peer-based support.

So, when we speak of volunteerism and gender justice and equality, we mean a whole host of things, including, that voluntary action contributes to gender justice and equality, women and LGBTQI youth volunteers are encouraged and fully supported whilst volunteering, youth volunteers (existing and new) are sensitised on gender justice and equality and the whole gamut of institutions supporting youth volunteerism are gender-responsive. The actions required to fully realise youth volunteerism and gender equality and justice are manifold and multi-fold as they require all of us, including, men, boys, youth, policymakers, and women, as well as LGBTQI members, to remove our own biases and prejudices that sustain gender discrimination.

Patriarchal structures and systems of gender injustice are deeply entrenched in society and everyday life, from the obvious violence that women experience in homes and public spaces, the one-sided conversations of household decision-making, to the invisibility of LGBTQI members in society despite their obvious presence on our streets. We owe much credit to women's organisations, civil society, policy-makers and a plethora of stakeholders who recognise the need, urgency and multi-faceted approaches required to tackle gender inequality.

At the same time, the youth dimension provides a comparative advantage that only young people have. In many instances youth have been at the forefront of bringing about gender equality and justice. The December 2012 protests led by youth in the aftermath of the gang rape of Jyoti Singh Pandey contributed to amendments in rape laws in the country. In April 2011, government propositions to change laws to reduce inheritance rights for women were halted as a result of youth protests in Bangladesh. The Arab Springs were also fuelled by youth vigour with women activists leading and organising demonstrations and social media/digital debates. Online activism, especially amongst LGBTQI groups, has not only given increasing recognition to LGBTQI issues but has also facilitated in creating debate and policy change to recognise a Third Gender in South Asia.

However, as we know, discrimination for girls and women occurs throughout their life-cycle – from sex selective abortion to sexual harassment in the workplace. For LGBTQI persons, securing work and acceptance from friends and family leaves them completely isolated and invisible in
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societies where recognition of their identity, and the ability to choose their identity, is governed by laws that don’t even recognise their identity in the first place. Gender biases and norms are manifested in subtleties in everyday life, and are a result of adverse religious and social norms. Transforming such norms requires unlearning and deprogramming gender stereotypes and biases.

Linking the two – youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality – therefore, has immense potential to cut the intergenerational cycle which feeds the system of patriarchy. Therefore, creating education, knowledge and action, to unlearn gender discrimination is fundamental to achieving it. Youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality can instil values of gender justice and equality within youth themselves, who can become change agents for gender justice and equality. Creating a culture of gender justice and equality in youth spaces, colleges, universities, schools and amongst youth can create shifts in gender norms in society, where youth understand the multiple dimensions and manifestations of gender inequality, including those that affect diverse women and LGBTQI persons – tribal, Muslim, Dalit, single women and trans persons – and can then voice out, and take action, from within their own homes and communities. Ensuring that youth volunteers themselves undergo a process of gender sensitisation is a must.

There are numerous possibilities for a win-win relationship where youth skills, knowledge and expertise can be harnessed to provide additional support to women’s organisations and civil society through formal and structured internships, where tech savvy students can extend skills to women’s organisations in need of such skills, and where mixed and exclusive groups educating young LGBTQI persons, men/boys and women/girls about sexuality and sexual reproductive and health rights (SRHR) can help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, encourage safe sex, and enhance bodily integrity for women and LGBTQI persons. Community youth can also facilitate gender and safety audits in schools and public places to reduce early dropout rates of girls in schools and create safe environments for women.

Structured volunteering, including under the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), can have potential to spur creativity amongst youth – LGBTQI members, men, women, boys, girls – to find local solutions to local problems, such as voicing solidarity with Dalit women to secure access to village water bodies, tubewells and wells and solving issues for women in collecting/fetching water. Local youth, including LGBTQI persons and women, can also bridge information gaps through innovative ways of communication – digital, village wall paintings, theatre, community radio – which also bring in local languages and contexts around protecting and promoting women’s rights, on rights and entitlements under government schemes and policies and on the manifestations of gender inequality. Youth can benefit by putting their education to work – utilising skills, knowledge and expertise. Volunteerism can provide insights and experience for youth into the work environment; can provide opportunities and networks for future employment and encourage creativity and entrepreneurship amongst youth to seek innovative solutions.

The concrete strategies recommended for Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice and Equality, in line with the National Youth Policy, are highlighted in the graphic on the next page.
There is evidence to support that group power, peer-based learning and support systems and experiential learning are key to empowering LGBTQI persons and women. Gender justice and equality is learnt and the process of unlearning it requires deep engagement and long-term commitment. Through co-ownership and partnerships between youth, women’s and civil society organisations, government and other stakeholders, local solutions, which tap into youth enthusiasm and potential, can provide linkages to strong women’s and civil society organisations – solutions which are supported by a gender-responsive policy and institutional environment. It is possible to make it happen.
SITUATION
Analysis

National Youth Policy

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) has been running schemes – such as the National Service Scheme (NSS), 1969, and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), 1972 – through programmes with schools and universities for the promotion of volunteerism amongst youth in India. The NYKS has more than 8 million youth volunteers, while the NSS has more than 3.4 million volunteers on the ground, engaged in various community engagement activities.

The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 of India proposes to initiate affirmative and positive action to ensure that national values are fostered in all young people, especially among members of the large youth volunteer force working under the aegis of leading youth development agencies of the country. The policy proposes to engage with youth clubs and the large volunteer force available within the youth development agencies to play a pivotal role in developing appropriate initiatives for young people.

Taking cognisance of the major recommendations of the NYP 2014 and past collaboration on recognition and promotion of volunteerism, the MoYAS, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) have jointly initiated a project titled ‘Strengthening NYKS and NSS’.

The overall aim of the project is to provide catalytic support to the Youth Volunteer Schemes of the MoYAS to facilitate youth participation and voice in peace and sustainable development programmes, towards the realisation of their full social, economic and human potential. It is expected that the project will help young people to gain a strong sense of civic engagement, and thus bring about positive transformation in their communities.

To foster increased recognition of the contribution of youth volunteering, the project will prepare an Action Plan for the roll-out of the NYP 2014 on selected themes, including Gender Justice and Equality. Before proceeding to detailing the strategies and actions around gender justice and equality, it is vital to highlight and understand where the two – youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality – conjoin, what the manifestations of gender justice and equality are, and how they affect different groups of women and LGBTQI persons.

Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice and Equality

What is Gender Justice and Equality?

‘Gender justice and equality’ means to give equal and just treatment along gendered lines, that is, between men and boys, women and girls and also along gender identity lines, including those persons identifying themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, [and any other] identity (LGBTQI). In realising and actualising gender equality and justice, a gender-responsive process to remove societal prejudices, patriarchal systems, biased social norms, adverse social/religious/customary practices and traditions and discriminatory
institutional structures (within individuals, homes, societies, laws/policies and institutions) is required. This will ensure that LGBTQI persons and women are recognised and treated as equal citizens, as well as have equitable opportunities of participation in social, political and economic life where their rights and freedoms are protected, promoted and fulfilled, their capabilities are enhanced and all manner of choices are expanded.

However, we do not live in a gender just or equal society. Long-standing patriarchal systems, power dynamics that enforce the view that women and LGBTQI members are secondary citizens, as well as adverse religious, traditional and customary practices, are some of the root causes of gender inequality.

To achieve gender justice and equality, as well as change institutions (economic, legal and political), we need to transform attitudes and behaviours and social norms and values in society, for instance, the way, women and girls are perceived and treated in society – their position and status, including addressing son-preference and daughter-discrimination. It also includes looking at changing gender roles and labour roles, that is, what kind of work women can and cannot do and adding value to the role that women do play in society, including unpaid work such as child care and looking after the elderly. This requires creativity from governments to include these within accounting systems and calls for a balanced division of unpaid work from men and women. It also includes not only creating

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1 Ideas/excerpts are taken from various gender equality training programmes done by Jagori and using the Kamla-Kamli training module.

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### Table 1: Manifestations of Gender Discrimination during a Person’s Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Potential issues to be addressed¹</th>
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</table>
| At birth          | • Discrimination begins at birth: preference for sons and discrimination against daughters  
|                   | • Sex selective abortion: current sex selection ratio is 914 girls for every 1,000 boys  |
| 3-5 years         | • Inadequate nutrition provided to the girl child  
|                   | • Girls not sent to school  |
| 11-16 years       | • Girls undertake household work/chores; less time devoted to homework  
|                   | • Early dropout rates of girls once menstruation starts  
|                   | • Dress code imposed  |
| 16+ years         | • Continued and increased share in household work  
|                   | • Reduced mobility as a result of safety issues (perceived and actual)  
|                   | • Control of behaviour, from sitting, talking to attending extra-curricular activities in school  
|                   | • Increasing lack of support and social networks  |
| Adult life/post-marriage | • Early marriage and child marriage  
|                   | • Maternal mortality; pregnancy-related complications  
|                   | • Permission required to move around and/or not in the absence of male accompaniment  
|                   | • Control on paid work  
|                   | • Burdens of household and care work increases  
|                   | • Susceptible to violence, particularly domestic violence and dowry/honour related violence and other forms, such as sexual harassment, trafficking, etc  
|                   | • Limited participation in public/political life  
|                   | • Limited participation in household decision-making  |
spaces for women to have a greater say in household decision-making and also within governance and public life, but also increasing and enhancing women’s visibility in public and personal spaces at all hours.

It is also important to understand that ‘women’ does not imply a homogenous group. Intersections with other discriminatory structures create ‘double’ and ‘triple’ burdens on women based on other identities – such as caste, class, age, race, religion, ethnicity (for example, tribal, from Northeast India, etc), LGBTQI, occupation (for instance, manual scavengers, domestic workers, etc), urban-rural, education, marital status, women living with HIV/AIDS (WLHIVs), persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIVs), women living in conflict, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, domestic workers, migrant workers, women with disability, etc. These multiple identities may lead to further discrimination and inequality.

Many patriarchal constructs and structures are the root causes of gender inequality and create power dynamics between men and women; they attempt to inhibit women’s freedoms and limit their participation in economic, social and political life. It is vital to understand that violence against women (VAW) and gender-based violence (GBV) are not the root causes of gender inequality. These are the consequences of patriarchal beliefs and social structures. Therefore, the Action Plan focusses, in particular, on transforming attitudes and behaviours of youth and the community, as opposed to only service delivery, while keeping in mind intersectional aspects of gender inequality.

**LGBTQI Members**

Many of the above intersectionalities also exacerbate the vulnerability of LGBTQI members. Their exclusion is further exacerbated due to their: (a) invisibility with the exception of transgender persons; and (b) their perceived threat to the ‘masculine heterosexual order’. LGBTQI members are, therefore, at much higher risk of being targets of violence, bullying, harassment, etc, leading to social exclusion, unemployment, exclusion from educational institutions, denial of access to health facilities and rejection by families and friends. Deep sensitisation within society and families, as well as services, including psychosocial support, access to decent work, etc, to enable LGBTQI persons to feel safe and welcome in society is urgently required.

**Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice and Equality in the Past and Present**

The United Nations recognises that “the terms volunteering, volunteerism and voluntary activities refer to a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation, undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor.” The concept of volunteerism amongst women, both in ancient, traditional and modern/contemporary societies is not a new concept. As an already marginalised and excluded group, women have been volunteering for each other for centuries. The role of traditional birth attendants or dais, assistance provided from other women – family members and/or neighbours – to pregnant women and new mothers, as well as common harvesting done by women collectively are all forms of volunteerism. A new idea emerging in the area of volunteerism defines the volunteer as a beneficiary and regards the concept of volunteerism as one which is reciprocal, building on the traditional practise of volunteerism amongst women.

Contemporary women’s and LGBTQI movements also adopt similar forms of volunteerism where, in the past and present, in the absence of institutionalised support – laws, policies, institutions – women survivors of violence were supported by other women, including being

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Table 2: Benefits of Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice and Equality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For youth (including women and LGBTQI members)</th>
<th>For women and LGBTQI members</th>
<th>For community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enables all to fully understand the discriminatory systems of gender inequality, take ownership and break intergenerational cycles of gender inequality</td>
<td>Has potential to create transformative and long-lasting change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting education to work:5 facilitates youth volunteerism around skill sets/knowledge they possess and creates multi- and interdisciplinary solutions</td>
<td>Adds another stakeholder to the struggle for gender equality</td>
<td>Communities thrive when women and LGBTQI members can fully participate – increases in GNP/GDP, healthy children, inclusive economies, transparent governance, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides insight into potential work environment(s)</td>
<td>Adds additional support networks to LGBTQI and women’s collectives</td>
<td>Engages men and boys in what has traditionally been seen as a ‘LGBTQI’ and/or ‘women’s’ issue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhances skills, such as confidence, leadership, interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Enables women to participate in all aspects of life – economic, social and political</td>
<td>Addresses the issue of masculinities and patriarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides networks for and/or future work opportunities</td>
<td>Increases LGBTQI persons and women’s confidence, agency, bargaining power, autonomy, negotiation skills, etc</td>
<td>Contributes to local, national and international development goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates enthusiasm, spurs innovation and entrepreneurial creativity</td>
<td>Increases LGBTQI and women’s (including youth volunteers) visibility in public spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates space for LGBTQI, men and women to work together and in partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates a culture of gender justice and equality in youth spaces, such as educational establishments, youth clubs/forums, as well as informal youth settings</td>
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provided shelter, food, etc, by women’s groups on a voluntary basis and where LGBTQI members today voluntarily provide online psychosocial support to each other. Solidarity and volunteerism is fundamental to the aim of achieving gender equality in both cases. In this regard, ownership of the issue and identifying with it in one’s own interest also facilitates volunteerism. Gender justice and equality is an issue, in fact, that is of concern to everyone, including men and boys, even if they do not see themselves as direct beneficiaries of it.

Why Youth Volunteerism for Gender Justice?

The process of promoting gender justice in youth volunteerism has huge potential to bring about gender justice and equality.

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4 Successful case studies on gender justice and equality and youth volunteerism have been given later on in the document.
5 Youth volunteerism is also spurred with an objective to gain technical skills for employability. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this Action Plan to enhance skill development per se (this is dealt with in the skill development Action Plan), perceived soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, confidence, empowerment, etc, in fact correlate with technical skills to create success and these should not be underestimated or not regarded as skills.
Engendering the National Youth Policy

Capacitating youth on gender justice and equality can enable them to understand the plethora of dimensions and issues surrounding gender justice and equality, as well as understand the root causes of gender inequality. Changes in individual youth values to increase respect for women and LGBTQI members, enhance women and LGBTQI youth’s sense of self-respect and dignity, and increase understanding of the power dynamics of patriarchy and gender inequality – can break the cycle of gender inequality. It is important for youth volunteers to not just recognise the symptoms – GBV, VAW, trafficking, etc – but also understand the root causes of gender inequality: son-preference and daughter-discrimination, patriarchal social norms, etc.

At the same time, youth offer a dynamism to create innovative solutions for gender justice and equality. Increasingly, and as also indicated above and in the case studies below, youth have been at the forefront of leading gender justice and equality struggles across the globe. They add an additional zeal which can go a long way in bringing about gender justice. Linking youth volunteerism and gender equality has additional benefits of contributing to youth development of LGBTQI persons, young men and women, who otherwise may be excluded from mainstream development. Youth – men, women and LGBTQI persons – both as volunteers and beneficiaries, would benefit through actions centred on youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality.

Challenges in Engaging Women and LGBTQI Members in Volunteering

Whilst there can be numerous benefits to women and LGBTQI youth, engaging this group can be extremely challenging, especially as systems of gender inequality which also manifest in voluntary settings can create barriers preventing women and LGBTQI youth from entering these spaces. It is critical to obtain both buy-in, as well as active and meaningful participation, of both LGBTQI persons and women, in order to have

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Challenges engaging women</th>
<th>Challenges engaging LGBTQI persons</th>
<th>Challenges engaging men on women’s/LGBTQI issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>May have to seek permission to leave the home (and may not get it)</td>
<td>Lack of awareness/inaccessibility/discrimination preventing access to voluntary opportunities</td>
<td>No or limited opportunities to participate in volunteerism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not permitted to volunteer for safety reasons, odd hours (after dark), etc</td>
<td>Social taboos preventing LGBTQI persons to volunteer</td>
<td>Prevented from volunteering by organisations/institutions, individuals, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>What will people say/think? – stigma around working on particular issues, such as sexuality, sexual rights, etc</td>
<td>Do not wish to volunteer labelled as LGBTQI person in a formal setting</td>
<td>Patriarchal attitudes/mind-sets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do not want ‘their’ daughter/sister/ wife ‘mixing’ with/in the company of ‘other’ women and/or boys/girls</td>
<td>Volunteering is not for women/girls and/or particular activities are not ‘fit’ for women/girls</td>
<td>Worried about what others, in particular, other men, will think if they volunteer on gender justice issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering is only fit for women who are unable to find paid work</td>
<td>Have to do household chores/looking after sibling, etc</td>
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the active and meaningful participation of these groups. The participation of LGBTQI persons, women and youth in voluntary programmes would also be a valuable indicator to the MoYAS and other stakeholders of gender justice and equality amongst youth. The table previous highlights the challenges that women and LGBTQI persons would face in volunteering, as well as challenges that institutions would face in engaging men youth volunteers on actions around gender justice and inequality. Overcoming these is detailed in the strategies.
**OVERVIEW** of Current Programming on Gender Justice and Equality and Youth Volunteerism

**Gender-responsive Programming**

It is useful to understand the overarching and general strategies adopted by gender-responsive programming, which can shed light on strategies and approaches that can be adopted for the Action Plan on youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality. Current development programming focusses on different thematic areas of women’s rights, which tackle different issues of gender inequality, such as trafficking, women’s health and reproductive rights and enhancing women’s education – formal and informal, etc (the different areas are detailed in Figure 1). Women’s development programming by women’s organisations take on a human rights-based approach which is centred on the principles detailed below – the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Framework – including participation and non-discrimination. These reinforce that the process of women’s rights programming, from planning to design to monitoring and evaluation, too have to take on a human rights and gender-responsive approach.

**Figure 1: Thematic Areas of Gender Justice and Equality**

![Figure 1: Thematic Areas of Gender Justice and Equality](image-url)
Development programmes on women and girl child rights endorse the idea of volunteering so that beneficiaries are co-creators, partners, co-owners and agents of programmes that they are also benefitting from. Many such programmes are centred on women’s collectives or mahila mandals – peer-based learning, support and movement building models – as well as other models which groom women as leaders and volunteers from the community to fulfil roles such as resource persons, trainers, vigilance team members, etc. The modes of programming, that is, action, vary from capacity building to service delivery. There is evidence to suggest that co-created, planned and implemented programming, building local institutions and involving local communities have long-term and sustainable impact.

Government Programmes on Gender Justice and Equality

There are numerous government schemes, policies and laws which tackle the issue of gender inequality in the different thematic areas of women’s rights, and which address issues of the multiple manifestations of gender inequality at various stages of the life-cycle. Many government schemes, policies and programmes also rely on volunteers to implement these. Potential intersections to create voluntary opportunities for youth to contribute to gender justice and equality can be explored below.

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)

- As the nodal ministry for women and child development, the MoWCD has a number of schemes concerning women’s rights and girl child development. Some of these include: Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, One Stop Centre Scheme, Women Helpline Scheme, UJJAWALA: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Working Women Hostels, Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers, Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP), and Nari Shakti Puraskar.

Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MoHRD)

- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS): This provides for nutrition for pregnant and lactating women (and children below six years). Establishment of Anganwadi Centre (AWC) is required in every settlement. Anganwadi workers and Anganwadi helpers are provided an honorarium to assist in the administration of the AWC; these are below the minimum wages. The role of Anganwadi/ mid-day meal workers is to administer basic healthcare to lactating mothers, pregnant women, administer mid-day meals in schools and provide healthcare-related information to women. There has been contention between women’s groups and government, that these roles ought to be recognised as professional and/or worker roles.

- Swadhar Greh: The objective is to provide temporary accommodation/short-stay homes, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women and girls who find themselves homeless for multiple reasons, such as family discord, violence, and those in moral danger.

- Gender Champions: This is a joint programme by the MoWCD and the MHRD where boys or girls become gender champions with the objective to create gender advocates who will facilitate in creating a gender equal environment within schools/colleges/academic institutions.

- Mahila Samakhya: Promoting women’s education, particularly in the areas of enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence of women; building a positive image of women by recognising their contribution to society, politics and the economy; developing ability to think critically; fostering decision making and action through collective processes; enabling women to make informed choices in areas such as education, employment and health (especially reproductive health); ensuring equal
participation in developmental processes; providing information, knowledge and skills for economic independence; enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society with the aim of enhancing their participation on an equal footing in all areas.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)

- National Rural Health Mission (NRHM): To improve rural health, with a particular focus on maternal and child health. Creation of posts of women health activists – ASHAs – who work as an intermediary between the community and the public health system for improved healthcare at the household level.
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY): Also under the NRHM for the promotion of safe institutional births with improved hospital care facilities and through an incentivised cash transfer system.

Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA)

- Nai Roshni: Leadership training scheme for minority women based on a trainer-of-trainers/peer learning model to instil confidence in minority women, provide knowledge on social schemes, health, sanitation, and provide techniques/capacity building on interacting with government agencies, etc.

Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)

- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)/Ajeevika: Setting up Self-help Groups (SHGs) for financial inclusion, access to formal banking systems, including credit, and livelihood planning for poor rural women in ‘backward’ districts. The idea is to also instil confidence, negotiating skills, etc, in women; therefore, the SHGs are managed and run by women for women. The larger goal of the scheme is poverty reduction and financial inclusion of rural communities/households.
- Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP): Empowering women farmers, including to access schemes, cross-learn and enhance women farmers’ knowledge and expertise.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

- Priyadarshini: Attempts to bring about holistic empowerment of 1,08,000 poor women and adolescent girls through formation of 7,200 SHGs.

National Service Scheme (NSS)

- The Social Service Programmatic activities undertaken by the NSS include a component to empower women, including: (a) knowledge enhancement on women’s rights within the constitutional and legal framework; (b) raising awareness on skills-based programmes where women are not engaged in an occupation; and (c) impart training to women on sewing, stitching, knitting, etc.

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)

- Focus areas of Annual Action Plan 2016-17: Distribution of iron folic tablets to adolescent girls; organising health check-ups, immunisation for children and pregnant mothers’ camps; facilitating institutionalised deliveries; motivating girls and their parents to postpone her marriage till she attains at least 18 years of age.

Skill Upgradation Training Programme (SUTP):
For women in 200 border/tribal/backward districts. The programme is aimed at enhancing skill development of women in the border or tribal or backward districts and facilitating access to employment opportunities. These are run under the District Youth Coordinator who identifies the needs of the women and makes linkages to raw materials and employers.
As discussed earlier, informal volunteerism amongst women and the LGBTQI community has existed traditionally and all over the world. Both movements were created and sustained through volunteerism from women and LGBTQI members. Services for women and LGBTQI members, the women’s movement today and many women’s organisations continue to function through volunteerism.

There are numerous activities/campaigns/advocacy work, etc, that happen globally within organisations and by individuals that work for the promotion and protection of women’s and LGBTQI members’ rights.

**Mahila Samakhya – Women’s Empowerment**

This government-initiated programme, instituted in 1988 to enable women’s empowerment through education, predominantly for scheduled caste (SC) and scheduled tribe (ST) women, set up women’s sanghas (collectives) for the empowerment of women. The sanghas consist of approximately 10–20 women volunteers, who would reach out to about 200 women, facilitated by a sahayogini, who was provided with an honorarium. The programme was run across 10 states reaching 1.5 million women.

The focus of Mahila Samakhya was women’s empowerment and not service delivery. Education around women’s position/status, patriarchy, sexual division of labour, VAWG, etc were points of discussion and used as a means to empower women. Skills, such as critical analysis, basic literacy, negotiation/bargaining, confidence, leadership, agency, etc, were imparted to women. A recent evaluation in 2014 has confirmed that the programme was successful in enabling marginalised women to come to the forefront in different spheres of life. The programme has been highly successful and is supported by women’s organisations. Recent withdrawal of funds and the discontinuation of the programme has also led to protest from many women’s groups.7

**Women-led Arab Spring – Women’s Political Participation**

Women volunteers were at the forefront of creating political transformation across various Arab countries, including, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, etc. Women’s volunteerism and participation was also secured by the secular and democratic ideology within which the Arab Spring movements took place, which allowed space for women to actively volunteer in the larger movement, where both men and women

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volunteers were present. Women were involved in protesting, mobilising other women using social media and other digital tools, offering community services, such as food and shelter, rehabilitating women survivors of violence, etc. This also resulted in many volunteers contesting for elections as candidates during the elections. At the same time, women volunteers were targeted and violence was used as a tool to suppress their presence on the streets and in political spaces. On occasion, the movements themselves were also not supportive of gender justice and women’s rights, despite their democratic ideology.

It is important to learn from the Arab Spring and other movements, including the left movement and civil rights movements where, despite secular民主ocratic ideology and women’s heavy presence, gender justice and equality was not the focus of these movements. Traditional practices/culture within the Arab countries prevented a gender-just ideology from rooting itself within the Arab Spring. In the absence of direct and intentional attempts to do this, this did not happen. In India, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, provisioning 33 per cent reservation for women within Panchayati Raj institutions, have also not led to women’s meaningful participation within these institutions. There has been much work done by civil society to ensure that elected women representatives (EWRs) are capacitated, and their positions not filled by sarpanch patis (husbands) or male members of the family.

ICT/Social Media – Preventing VAW in Bangladesh

During the 16-day activism campaign against violence against women and girls (VAWG), UNVs joined the campaign by creating flyers to sensitise commuters on safe transport, free from harassment, for women. They also embarked on buses to raise awareness of the harassment women experience on buses. The campaign was devised by UNVs, which they named ‘Let’s all move together with respect, without discrimination and without harassment’. The campaign was received with enthusiasm from all members of the community, and particularly women commuters. UNVs harnessed their digital expertise to create flyers, etc, and give voice to women who otherwise would not protest against harassment and demand seats that are reserved for them.

Mobilisation and Voice through ICT/Social Media – LGBTQI Groups on Campus

Despite the criminalisation of same sex couples in Indian law, college/university campuses in India where there are members of LGBTQI groups have created virtual forums for interaction amongst

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<tr>
<td>Non-discrimination</td>
<td>The principle of non-discrimination places emphasis on removing all forms of discrimination against women, which implies discrimination against all women with the understanding that women are not a homogenous group. Multiple identities of religion, class, culture, etc, shape the multiplicity of discrimination experienced by women, and state obligation in this regard requires states to take steps to remove all forms of discrimination against all women</td>
<td>Youth volunteerism and respective services should be promoted and available equally amongst men, women and LGBTQI members. Youth volunteerism should contribute to removing all forms of discrimination against women and members from the LGBTQI community</td>
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| **Equality and Substantive Equality**  
Article 3: “States parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.” | Measures are taken to ensure that women are able to exercise and enjoy all fundamental freedoms and human rights on a basis of equality with men. This is also known as formal equality. As well as formal equality, CEDAW calls for and enshrines the principle of substantive equality, which requires states to take all appropriate measures to address discrimination against women and create conditions so that there is equality of opportunity and equality of results. | Youth volunteerism is available equally to men, women and LGBTQI members, and appropriate steps are taken to ensure active and meaningful participation by women and LGBTQI members, such as gender neutral toilets, safe transport to and from voluntary sites, etc. Youth volunteerism should formulate activities that promote equality between men, women and youth, as well as ensure that activities contribute to equality of opportunity and outcome, for example, training/meetings in the community are held at times that are conducive to women, separate meetings/training held for LGBTQI members and by members representing the LGBTQI community. |
| **Temporary Special Measures**  
Article 4: 1. “Adoption by states parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved. ...” | To undertake positive discrimination and create positive conditions for women in the form of special temporary measures to both prevent discrimination and ensure substantive equality between women and men. | Youth volunteerism is available equally to men, women and LGBTQI members, and positive discrimination is undertaken for women and LGBTQI members to participate, such as quotas for LGBTQI members to volunteer, placing women in gender-friendly environments, etc. Youth volunteerism engages in activities that create positive conditions for women and LGBTQI members, such as on livelihood activities that are conducive for LGBTQI members, supporting elected women representatives (EWRs), etc. |
| **Transformative Equality**  
Elimination of prejudices and customary practices – Article 5: “States parties shall take all appropriate measures: (a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;...” | All appropriate measures are taken to remove all discriminatory socio-cultural and customary barriers which perpetuate and reinforce gender unequal norms and practices, in recognition that socio-cultural and customary practices are the underlying causes of gender inequality which maintain the current unequal status quo between men and women in all aspects of life. | Youth volunteers (men, women, LGBTQI members) should understand the root causes – customary, traditional, religious, socio-cultural – of gender inequality, in order to meaningfully engage on gender justice volunteerism. Youth volunteerism engages in activities that tackle the root causes – customary, traditional, religious, socio-cultural – that reinforce gender inequality, such as dowry, sexuality and sexual freedom, etc. |
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Prescribes for women’s participation in political and public life. Article 7(b) in particular places the onus on states to eliminate discrimination which prevents women’s participation in public and political life, as well as take positive steps to ensure that women participate, on equal terms with men, in the formulation and implementation of policy, including budget formulation and implementation.</td>
<td>Organisations involved in promoting youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality have proportional representation of women’s/LGBTQI groups/organisations, and structures are amended to ensure that women/LGBTQI members are consulted and incorporated in decision making. Women/LGBTQI youth volunteers have a say in implementing volunteerism activities for gender justice and equality. Youth volunteerism engaged in activities that promote women’s and LGBTQI members’ involvement in public and political life.</td>
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Categorisations:

CEDAW, principle, General definition, Implications within and for volunteerism.

CEDAW  principle

**Participation**

Article 7: “States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; (c) To participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country”
The strategies and solutions devised for the Action Plan have been drawn from the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) principles, which form the rationale for the recommendations and how they should be implemented within the Action Plan. Again, as also discussed above, the human-rights based approach to programming is also incorporated within this framework, so as to include participation from volunteers in designing and implementing strategies.

Taking a Rights-based Perspective on Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice: Using the CEDAW Principles as a Framework

CEDAW Principles

CEDAW is guided by five overarching principles: (i) non-discrimination; (ii) equality and substantive equality; (iii) temporary special measures; (iv) elimination of prejudices and customary practices; and (v) participation.

What does Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice Entail for the Action Plan?

Today, youth in India are already informally and formally engaged in action to bring about gender justice. The protests following the December 2012 gang-rape of Jyoti Singh Pandey, which rippled across the country and received large-scale global attention, is one example where youth and students took the lead in voicing their outrage against VAW. This culminated in legal reform; mainstream media taking up the issue of gender justice; numerous films being made on gender justice; public debate facilitated by social media and online platforms – which is still continuing. It is therefore vital to channel youth energies into formal voluntary opportunities that can help to achieve societal goals, including gender equality and gender justice. At the same time, actively engaging women and LGBTQI members can help in bringing about gender-just change for women and LGBTQI members to increase their mobility, exposure, visibility in public spaces, as well as activity in civic engagement and in leadership positions.

Given that patriarchal structures (those that favour the heteronormative man) are deeply entrenched in society and have evolved over a period of time, transforming such structures and giving critical power to women, girls and LGBTQI members, so that society is more gender-just and equal, is also likely to take a long time. It is, therefore, imperative that we see gender justice and equality in light of this to ensure that programmes and interventions around gender justice and equality are not piecemeal interventions but are long-lasting changes that have intergenerational and sustainable impact. As well as empowering women, engaging with young people (and children) to view men, women and members of the LGBTQI community equally can have long-lasting and sustainable effects. Moreover, engaging with men and boys can help dispel myths around masculinities and extend understanding that this is not only a women’s issue. These can create serious shifts in society and intergenerational impacts that otherwise are difficult to achieve.
Engendering the National Youth Policy

Youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality, therefore, requires a holistic approach which also engenders institutions responsible for planning and implementing youth volunteerism programmes, as well as volunteers themselves. Attitudinal, behavioural and conscious shifts are required amongst volunteers themselves before they are able to engage in volunteering for gender equality and justice. This forms the basis for many women's rights programmes and is a best, but also essential, practice. At the same time, the engendering process is also one that evolves over time, and a good level of understanding is required for volunteers to effectively work for gender justice.

It is important, therefore, to understand the process of creating actions around youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality, as well as the benefits and rationale of engaging in such an endeavour. Laying this groundwork also facilitates in understanding the rationale behind the recommendations in this Action Plan.

The main focus of the Action Plan on Gender Justice and Equality within the National Youth Policy 2014 is to create internal (within schools/colleges/universities) and external environments which can create platforms, spaces and motivation for youth to engage in volunteerism on gender equality and justice. Much of what we see, in terms of gender inequality and injustice manifests within ourselves as individuals and within members of our families or communities, which we see reflected outside; this requires changes in attitudes and behaviours and social norms. To create valuable and quality opportunities for volunteers on gender equality and justice, it is imperative that a gender equal and just environment is created within schools/colleges/universities and that there is a holistic and nuanced understanding of what gender equality and justice entails. The focus of this Action Plan, therefore, is also to create youth volunteerism within schools/colleges/universities to sensitize and engage students on gender equality and justice.

This begins with the premise that change has to come at the individual level and, at the same time, takes cognisance of the numerous decades of experience of women's organisations and gender justice groups on working on gender equality issues, where sensitisation of women and communities on gender equality and justice is usually the first step of any intervention. Therefore, a great deal of focus has been given to sensitisation and awareness raising activities within schools/colleges/universities/youth clubs/rural spaces and also within communities using different tools.

Figure 2: Youth Volunteerism and Gender Justice and Equality

- Youth volunteerism policies and institutions create voluntary opportunities around gender justice and equality
- Women, including youth LGBTQI members and women, benefit as agents and beneficiaries of youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality
- LGBTQI and women youth are targeted as prospective volunteers
- Youth volunteerism policies and institutions address barriers preventing women and LGBTQI members to volunteer
- Existing and new women and LGBTQI youth volunteers’ (existing and new) rights are fully protected and promoted
- Existing and new women and LGBTQI youth volunteers are capacitated on gender justice and equality
- Existing and new women and LGBTQI volunteers have institutional support, such as safe transport, gender neutral toilets, sexual harassment policies, in voluntary placements
Figure 3: How to Go About Engaging Youth Volunteerism on Gender Equality and Justice?

Aims and Objectives of the Action Plan

The overall aim of the Action Plan is manifold but focusses on three key areas:

• To tackle the root causes of gender inequality.
• To sensitise youth on gender justice and equality and create a generation of gender justice advocates, thereby also contributing to youth development and breaking the cycle of intergenerational gender biases.
• To utilise youth skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to spur innovation in the area of gender justice and equality.

Creating an Enabling Environment

The first step of the Action Plan on Youth Volunteerism and Gender and Equality proposes to take a rights-based and systematic approach to involving youth volunteers on gender justice and equality. In light of this, it is important to ensure that those within institutions supporting youth volunteerism and gender justice and equality also gain a gender justice perspective. Given below are recommendations to create a gender-just and equal environment within the NSS and NYKS’ structures.

Creating an Enabling Gender-Just Environment within the NSS and NYKS

• Mandatory training for all volunteers/programme officers/teachers on gender justice by authorised LGBTQI/women’s groups/organisations, including on patriarchy, power dynamics between different groups, pertaining to age, class, sexuality, caste, etc.
• Ensure NSS/NYKS has women in leadership positions within appropriate and frequent intervals.
• Ensure adequate sexual harassment policy within institutions premises/offices and schools/colleges.
• Ensure safety/infrastructure within offices/premises used by women, including women volunteers with disability.
Engendering the National Youth Policy

- Ensure special quotas for LGBTQI members to partake in volunteerism.
- Promote gender justice within the school environment, including using youth volunteers (also see below).

**Strategies**

NYP Objective 1: Create a productive workforce that can make a sustainable contribution to India’s economic development

1. Utilising youth skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to create innovation

Linkages should be created with civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector and other organisations to create opportunities for youth to utilise their skills and knowledge and be given an opportunity to put their education into practise. Short-term (three to six months) voluntary assignments can provide valuable opportunities for youth to gain experience, exposure to working culture, as well as provide opportunities for exploring future work opportunities. Social entrepreneurship start-ups, corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments, civil society, that work on promoting gender justice and equality, can be linked to youth through online/digital portals. (Also see strategy 3 below.) Innovations and ideas should be co-created between organisations and youth or amongst youth so that they are active participants in this.

NYP Objective 2: Develop a strong and healthy generation equipped to take on future challenges

2. Promoting youth leadership

Exclusive youth groups at local level (highlighted below under NYP Objective 5) can facilitate in discussion and awareness raising around sexual reproductive and health rights (SRHR) and adolescent health for youth development, in particular, women and LGBTQI persons. Youth volunteers from the NSS and NYKS can also facilitate raising awareness around health and sports for women, who otherwise do not get this exposure. Localised sports events and events, including with adolescent girls and LGBTQI persons, should be created for women’s recreation, as well as to promote women’s health. The time before or after events can also be used (or side events could be organised) to raise awareness about schemes, such as JSY and ICDS, concerning women’s health. Youth volunteers from youth groups at the local level should support ASHAs, ANMs and Anganwadi workers. Where the MoHFW feel appropriate, youth in this regard could also provide vigilance to assess what additional support these workers require.

NYP Objective 3: Instil social values and promote community service to build national ownership

3. Tackling root causes and breaking intergenerational cycles by building youth capacities on gender justice and equality

The Action Plan proposes that, for the purposes of youth development and also to meet the objectives of gender justice and equality, youth development and rights form a central part of the Action Plan. Youth (men, women and LGBTQI persons) should be sensitised and their capacities built on what gender justice and equality is. This can be done through the MoWCD/MoHRD Gender Champions initiative, where Gender Champion Clubs form the nodal institution within educational establishments to promote and protect gender justice and equality. Mass communications (digital/online and other forms) campaigns can create awareness on gender justice and equality, including showing films, holding debates, celebrating international women’s days and taking part in LGBTQI Pride parades. Women’s experts, activists and academicians can also be called in to give talks and lectures. Information and communication technology (ICT) based tools, such as safetipin, can be harnessed

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10 Strategy details are highlighted in a detailed section in the document.
where women and men can also build local travel route safety information, which can also be promoted within campuses to report where spaces are unsafe for women and LGBTQI members. Organisations other than LGBTQI ones, women’s and other CSOs can also undertake training with gender champions and others, who can form part of a peer-based training model where they train others.

4. Connecting youth to civil society through internships and voluntary assignments

Through the NSS and also directly, volunteers can be placed within LGBTQI or women’s organisations and other CSOs as volunteers/interns where they can contribute to the work of the organisations according to their interests. CSOs would also find hosting interns and volunteers useful where the latter can fill key human resource gaps. Interns/volunteers should be placed according to their interests and skill sets, that is, where a website developer is required to build a local women’s organisation’s website and or monitoring and evaluation system. Creative ways of using young people in civil society can be carved out, which cut across disciplines, for example, engineers can connect to livelihood-based organisations for improving irrigation techniques for women farmers; filmmakers can be linked to organisations in conflict areas to create awareness of VAW and other issues facing women; marketing and business students can be connected to women’s producer and cooperative groups. Where possible, volunteers should be provided with resources where they have out-of-the-box ideas/innovations that they wish to try out but these should be vetted by experts.

NYP Objective 4: Facilitate participation and civic engagement at all levels of governance

5. Connecting youth with existing women’s institutions: Mahila mandals and SHGs

Whilst the country has had success in creating mahila mandals and SHGs, both through government initiatives as well as civil society, there are obvious capacities between SHGs across the country for contextual and other reasons. The youth groups and SHGs can cross-learn and provide different angles of exposure to each other and work as co-sister institutions. Youth groups can create efficiency in the functioning of SHGs, through awareness raising on rights and entitlements under schemes and policies, such as the Block Development Office, Panchayat, District Collector’s office, police, banks, etc, which can diminish fears amongst women, in particular marginalised women, in approaching such institutions. SHGs, clusters and federations under the NRLM can be partnered with, where youth groups and volunteers can also assist SHGs in social entrepreneurship endeavours. NYKS volunteers can also be utilised to support local level SHGs.

6. Creating experiential learning and peer-based models of learning

There is evidence to support that training programmes do not necessarily achieve the level of learning required and/or do not necessarily culminate into action. Youth can be mobilised to create innovative ways of experiential learning using mass communications and arts and culture where women, adolescent girls and LGBTQI youth are involved in creating materials for awareness and public campaigns around gender justice and equality. This can facilitate larger change on individual consciousness levels for the volunteers involved, as well as societal change for target audiences. This can be done through the NSS.

NYP Objective 5: Support youth at risk and create equitable opportunity for all disadvantaged and marginalised youth

7. Creating exclusive and mixed spaces for adolescent youth – men, women and LGBTQI persons

Mixed groups comprising youth, men and women should be created at the village or cluster level (youth clubs can be harnessed to facilitate this) by volunteers so that they create spaces to engage in governance and
discuss issues concerning youth. SHG leaders can facilitate in creating groups and provide key support to youth groups, which can also empower youth groups and women leaders. Information on safe sex and sexually transmitted diseases can be promoted through these groups. An exclusive space for youth can also challenge villages and create social pressure around issues, such as challenging villages to create dowry-free and GBV-free villages. Social media groups linking village groups across localities can be created so that groups can gain exposure to other groups and their respective activities.

**Key Partnerships**

Where possible, key partnerships should be explored with the ministries listed below, including exploring possibilities of sharing resources and institutional spaces to support youth volunteerism for gender justice and equality.

**Government**

- **MoWCD** – as nodal ministry for women’s rights, and convergence with MoWCD’s programmes, such as ICDS, Gender Champions, Saksham, etc. The MoWCD should also be a key partner in providing resource material to the MoYAS, NSS and NYKS, as well as recommending CSOs/experts where partnerships can be forged.
- **MoHRD** – as a co-Ministry of the Gender Champions initiative. Its support should be gained to use this platform as a key institution where NSS and NYKS volunteers can also be incorporated to create gender responsive education spaces.
- **NSS/NYKS** – the Action Plan proposes to work with NSS/NYKS volunteers. They already exist in many places, select pilot actions can be undertaken in these spaces.
- **MoRD/NRLM** – as the nodal ministry for NRLM which has responsibility for a huge number of SHGs in rural areas, the NRLM can provide a platform to access SHGs. At the same time, volunteers can facilitate in meeting key goals for NRLM/MoRD.

**Civil Society**

Key women’s organisations can be approached as resource groups to undertake first sets of trainings with volunteers. This will enable the creation of a peer model where volunteers all undergo a sensitisation process before undertaking formal voluntary assignments. These organisations can also provide material (in various languages) which has also been created and which can extend understanding and provide inspiration to youth during their voluntary assignments. On the same note, local women’s organisations across the country will have localised manuals/brochures which can be utilised. Placements can also be undertaken with these organisations.
## Action Plan Part A: Strategic Recommendations for Implementing the NYP 2014 at the National Level

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<tr>
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<th>Activities</th>
<th>Expected outcomes</th>
<th>Target group (youth workers, youth volunteers, government functionaries etc.)</th>
<th>Timeline (immediate, intermediate, long term)</th>
<th>Priority (as per timeline, resource availability)</th>
<th>Responsible partner (MoYAS, NYKS, NSS, RGNIYD any other ministry/department/institution)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1      | Youth Profiling | • Extracting information from census on youth disaggregated by age, gender/sexual orientation, education, social groups, disability, employment, etc, and further analysing the data  
• Creating and making available youth profiles disaggregated by age, gender/sexual orientation, social group, region/state, education, disability occupation, needs/aspirations, any other, for policy and programming purposes to duty bearers  
• Developing ICT tool and web GIS platform for generating and analysing database available on the following:  
  • On youth  
  • On youth volunteers separately  
  • Youth-led organisations, youth clubs, young women’s groups  
  • Organisations working with youth  
  • Training centres  
  • Youth resource centres  
  • Youth networks and platforms  
  • Developing a directory of youth organisations (every five years)  
• Data on youth, youth volunteers, organisations working with youth available for policy and planning measures  
• Profiles of various youth groups are available for policy making, planning and programming available  
• Adequate information on socially excluded and marginalised sections of youth are available for building equitable and inclusion strategies  
• Information on different models of working with youth and resources available in a given area | Policy makers, government functionaries, youth workers, youth volunteers, CSOs | Immediate | December 2017 | Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) |
## Engendering the National Youth Policy

### Target group
- Youths
- Youth workers
- Volunteers
- Government fonctionries

### Expected outcomes
- Increased visibility of youth champions and role models
- Improved access to resource and facilities
- Enhanced capacity of youth for leadership

### Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key action</th>
<th>Expected outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mapping expectations and challenges of young people from volunteering opportunities</td>
<td>Needs and challenges of youth will be mapped. Better nuanced and focussed strategies for working with youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping needs and aspirations of young people with a positive bias towards women, as well as disadvantaged and socially excluded youth</td>
<td>Needs and aspirations of youths will be mapped. More focussed strategies for women, differently abled and socially excluded community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiling of local youth champions and role models with special focus on disadvantaged and excluded youth</td>
<td>Needs and aspirations of youths will be mapped. Increasing the visibility of youth champions in public forums</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Responsible partners
- UN, MoYAS, NSS, MoYAS, NSS, NYKS, RGNIYD, any other ministry/department/institution

### Priority (as per timeline, resource availability)
- Immediate, December 2017

### Timeline (Immediate, intermediate, long term)
- Immediate

### Responsible partner (MoYAS, NSS, NYKS, RGNIYD, any other ministry/department/institution)
- District Youth Coordinators (DYCs), Regional Directors (NSS)
- UN, DYC, MoYAS
- UN, DYC, MoYAS
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</table>
| d      | Reorienting the youth festival and youth conclave to recognise and highlight youth diversity, resilience and contribution | • Organise discussions and debates to provide space for youth to discuss their aspirations and needs  
• Engage young people to create youth festivals; young people part of design and agenda setting of the festival  
• Holding interactive sessions across diverse groups of youth to promote collaboration | • Youth aspirations realised  
• Better engagement across diverse youth groups  
• Future collaborations evolve  
• Youth contribution | Youth, youth volunteers, ministry | Intermediate | December 2018 | UNV, DYC, MoYAS, NYKS |
| e      | High profiling of awards: Youth and Volunteers | • Engage with media to highlight the importance of award/festival at national level  
• Involve the youth awardees in district- and state-level meetings | • Motivation and encouragement of youth  
• National attention on youth issues and contribution  
• Youth from remote areas and disadvantaged youth are recognised and awarded  
• Youth role models emerge | Media, youth awardees, youth-led organisations, CSOs | Intermediate | 2018 | MoYAS, PMO |
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| 2     | Youth Highlighting | • Formulate a National Communication Strategy focusing on youth diversity, needs and aspirations, contributions, awareness creation, outreach, advocacy and engagement of social media (internal and external agenda for youth empowerment)  
• Creating a strong tag-line to create visibility about investing in youth empowerment (for example, empowered India)  
• Organising slogan contest which can be held at national and local levels  
• Prepare documentaries capturing youth diversity, contribution, achievements  
• Organise media events  
• Create Facebook and Twitter accounts and post regular blogs on social media to provide an interface with youth | National attention on youth roles and contributions increased in the youth empowerment strategy and programmes  
• Improved strategy to engage with youth  
• Increased investment on youth empowerment  
• Expanding and deepening the engagement with youth  
• Marginalised and socially excluded youth are covered |
|       |            | Timeline (immediate, intermediate, long term) | Priority (as per timeline, resource availability) |
|       |            | Immediate 2017–March 2018 | MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC |
|       |            | April 2018–December 2018 | MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC |

3 Setting up of National Advisory Bodies and Strengthening of Similar Structures at District and State Levels

| a. | National Advisory Body | Setting up of a National Advisory Body including experts, youths, CSOs and youth organisations reflecting social diversities and disadvantaged social groups |
|    | Experts from disadvantaged communities | Policy, planning and programming are more contextual and nuanced issues and needs can be included in the youth empowerment strategy and programmes |
|    | Improved planning and programming in the concerned bodies | |

|       | Timeline (immediate, intermediate, long term) | Priority (as per timeline, resource availability) |
|       | Intermediate 2018 | MoYAS |

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Youth, youth-led organisations, NGOs, media organisations</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>National attention on youth roles and contributions increased in the youth empowerment strategy and programmes</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved strategy to engage with youth</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased investment on youth empowerment</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding and deepening the engagement with youth</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
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<td>Marginalised and socially excluded youth are covered</td>
<td>MoYAS, NYKS, UNW, DPC</td>
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</table>
| 4      | Capacity Building | Building capacity of existing youth workers through certification courses and training programmes | Capacity building programmes on:  
  • Understanding youth and how to work with them  
  • Understanding needs, diversity, perspectives, gender and identity, volunteer management, etc  
  • How to create safe spaces for young people’s engagement  
  • Short-term certification training may be developed (could be online)  
  • Training of trainers programme on all four thematic areas which will help to create a state-wise pool of trainers  
  • Assessment of the existing institutions (ETIs) and training courses  
  • Setting up of youth workers’ networks and connecting with them for knowledge sharing |  
  • Increased numbers of youth workers  
  • Youth workers emerge from socially excluded communities  
  • Knowledge base of youth workers enhanced  
  • Better implementation of policies and strategies  
  • Innovation from the ground | Youth-led organisations, training institutions, CSOs, NSS/NYKS | Intermediate | 2018–2020 | RGNIYD, UNDP, MoYAS, CSOs |
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| b. | Building capacity of youth (including volunteers) | • Developing online courses on volunteering through NYKS and NSS portals and in the four thematic areas  
• Design programmes for facilitating cross-border exchange (different identities, in terms of caste, religion, sexuality) of opinion, ideas and life experiences  
• IEC material for four thematic areas can be developed (this could be a part of the project)  
• Guidelines on designing of youth volunteering programme  
• Designing volunteer programmes that empower the youth and are youth led  
• Youth and youth work related theme-based booklets developed and made available at youth clubs, panchayats, local bodies, schools and colleges | • Deepened knowledge and skills  
• Youth volunteers emerge from socially excluded communities  
• Healthier relationship among youth across different communities  
• Better translation of the four thematic objectives on the ground  
• Youth volunteers emerge | Youth, youth workers, youth-led organisations, training institutions | Immediate | 2018–2020 | MoYAS, RGNIYD, UNDP |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| 5 | **Institution Strengthening** |  |  |  |  |  | |
| a. | Setting up appropriate mechanisms at the ministry level for implementation – for example, nodal cells/persons within ministry to promote and track convergence, social and gender inclusion, etc. | • Capacity building of MoYAS government functionaries; and at the state levels  
• Identification of support agencies  
• Council of young people to input the direction of institutions | • Improved strategies and resources to promote youth empowerment  
• Youth voice in decision making | Government functionaries, MoYAS, youth | Intermediate | 2018 | UNV/UNDP |
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</table>
| b.     | Convergence building with other ministries | • Set up a platform/committee at national and state level to bring together various relevant ministries and government departments to share good practices by the particular ministries, specific to programme engagement and financial investment  
• Enabling youth connect with other ministries, particularly with ministries focussed on vulnerable and marginalised youth  
• Relevant ministry’s yearly action plan states its specific initiatives with young people and includes such activities in its annual report  
• Creating guidance notes for each ministry on how to promote youth volunteerism and engage youth through their core programmes | • Youth agenda gets accepted across ministries as their integral component  
• Greater clarity in individual ministries on the role and potential of youth in their ministry, purpose and results  
• Large proportion of youth get covered | Relevant ministries, including MoYAS | Intermediate | 2018–2020 | MoYAS |
| c.     | Implementation of gender and social inclusion policy | • Creating an enabling environment at the ministry for the implementation of gender and social inclusion policy  
• MoYAS creates and share model policies to all institutions to adapt and adopt  
• Create gender and social inclusion indicators and incorporate them at all reporting levels  
• Include gender and social inclusion as criteria for selection for all awards  
• Include women and socially excluded youth in all profiling, awarding and celebrations, etc | • Greater clarity and consensus on promoting gender and social inclusion  
• Gender and social inclusion becomes fundamental strategies and outcomes at all levels of various institutions  
• Clarity on institutional mandates and consequences | All ministries | Intermediate | 2018 | MoYAS, NSS, NYKS |
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| d.     | Creating a reporting mechanism | • Preparation of detailed Annual Report  
• Quarterly newsletter  
• Weekly blogs on the website  
• Regular tweets and posts on Facebook  
• Reporting reflects diversity, disadvantaged groups and inclusion actions  
• Include innovations in reporting | • Visibility of youth work  
• Informed decisions around youth issues | All ministries, youth organisations, policy makers | Immediate | December 2017 | NSS, NYKS, MoYAS, UNDP |
| e.     | Youth budgeting | • Advocacy for youth budgeting with various ministries  
• Leverage special budgets available with different ministries for youth empowerment – for example, Scheduled Caste sub-plan, tribal sub-plan, multi-sector development programme, disability specific budgets, gender specific budgets, etc  
• Providing details on budgeting in the annual report | • Ministry will allocate allocation of specific budget for youth development  
• Planned activities for youth engagement through different ministries | Different ministries, departments and organisations working with youth | Intermediate | 2018 | MoYAS |
| f.     | Partnerships with the private sector | • Building partnerships with the private sector at national and local levels – for innovation and skills; for resource mobilisation: financial and technical (corporate volunteers)  
• Create provisions to tap CSR funds for development activities  
• Include youth development work as a core area for CSR funding | • Public-private partnership (PPP) models to support positive youth development initiatives  
• Mobilisation of funds in youth sector  
• Increased budget for youth development in private sector | Private sector including corporates | Long term | 2018 | MoYAS, UNV, DYC |
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<td>Education as a Strategy for Youth Development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Partnerships with educational institutes and academia</td>
<td>• Partnerships with educational institutions to do research on aspirations, needs, of young people, role of youth in development, youth development and youth leadership programmes and other youth-related issues &lt;br&gt; • Design online programmes &lt;br&gt; • Collaborate with UGC to set up research/policy institutions/bodies on youth development &lt;br&gt; • Collaborate with women studies' units and centre for exclusion and inclusive policies in various universities</td>
<td>• Researched information available on youth issues and youth empowerment &lt;br&gt; • More academic institutions are engaged in youth strategy and planning &lt;br&gt; • Independent data and information on youth issues &lt;br&gt; • Focussed Information on socially excluded and marginalised youth issues</td>
<td>Youth, youth development professionals, research scholars and academic institutions</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>MoYAS and MoHRD, UGC</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Setting up a National Commission for Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Setting up of a National Commission for youth</td>
<td>• This will be an independent body which will have oversight for youth development, needs, issues and empowerment in keeping with constitutional mandates and progress of youth at the global level &lt;br&gt; • Public consultations to determine the role of the commission in youth development</td>
<td>• Focussed national attention on youth &lt;br&gt; • Youth rights are protected and promoted, violations addressed &lt;br&gt; • International collaboration and cooperation on youth empowerment</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>MoYAS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 8      | Promoting Youth Volunteering                                                | a. Develop Strategies to promote youth volunteering with special attention to disadvantaged and socially excluded youth  
• Mapping the need of young people from volunteering opportunities. This can be done as part of the situational analysis mentioned in point no 1c  
• Guidelines on designing of youth volunteering programmes with focus on creating safe spaces which facilitate learning about self by engaging with community issues  
• Make volunteering aspirational among young people by disseminating stories on impact of volunteering in personal and professional growth through mainstream media  
• Setting up of NSS self-finance units in private educational institutions  
• Promoting volunteering as a culture at school level through National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NEUPA), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and state boards  
• Introducing awards at the school level for good practices of promoting volunteering  
• Design robust volunteering programmes specific to the four thematic areas which will include set of specific activities to be conducted by the volunteers  
• Volunteer management guidelines prepared  
• Mapping of existing organisations/programmes on youth volunteering  
• Introducing mandatory number of hours for volunteering at the local level | • Informed volunteering programming by NSS and NYKS and other youth organisations  
• Increased effectiveness of Volunteering programmes  
• Participation of youth in volunteering programmes from different backgrounds  
• Volunteering emerges as a capacity building vehicle  
• Volunteers is a sought-after activity among young people  
• Greater acceptance and recognition of volunteering efforts made by youth  
• Volunteering embedded as part of school education  
• High level of ownership among volunteers and optimal potential of volunteer unleashed  
• Empowered volunteers | NYKS, NSS and youth organisations and departments/ institutions who want to engage youth volunteers | Immediate  
Intermediate  
Long term  
Intermediate  
Immediate  
Intermediate  
Long term  
Immediate |
<p>|        |                                                                              | | | | | | UNV, DYC, NYKS, NSS and RGNIYD, MoYAS, UNDP, UNV |</p>
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</table>
| 8      | Promoting Youth Volunteering | • Training to be organised for young people on developing youth leadership and building an understanding on volunteering and how it is going to add value to their own self  
• Highlighting youth volunteering work at different platforms  
• Model strategies, mechanisms are evolved and fine-tuned  
• District models available for states to adopt and adapt  
• Lessons are learnt and improved upon  
• At scale adaption possible after pilot period  
• NYKS, NSS, CSOs, youth organisations, youth volunteers, media, various government departments | • Setting up of NSS self-finance units in private educational institutions  
• Promoting volunteering as a culture at school level through national council of Educational research and Training (NCERT), National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NEUPA), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and state boards  
• Introducing awards at the school level for good practices of promoting volunteering  
• Designing robust volunteering programmes - specific to the four thematic areas which will include set of specific activities  
• Volunteer management guidelines prepared  
• Mapping of existing organisations/programmes on youth volunteering  
• Introducing mandatory number of hours for volunteering at the local level  | Immediate  
| 9      | Plan of Action | • All the above recommendations to be implemented first in 29 districts which are a part of the project – ‘Strengthening of NYKS and NSS’ | • Informed volunteering programming by NSS and NYKS and other youth organisations  
• Increased effectiveness of Volunteering programmes  
• Participation of youth in volunteering programmes from different backgrounds  
• Volunteering emerges as a capacity building vehicle  
• Volunteering is a sought-after activity among young people  
• Greater acceptance and recognition of volunteering efforts made by youth  
• Volunteering embedded as part of school education  
• High level of ownership among volunteers and optimal potential of volunteer unleashed  | Immediate  
|        |            |            |                  | NYKS, NSS, CSOs, youth organisations, youth volunteers, media, various government departments | | MoYAS, UNV, DYC, UNDP |
### Action Plan Part B: Strategic Recommendations for Implementing the NYP 2014 for Gender Justice and Equality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NYP objectives</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Expected outcomes</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Target group and numbers</th>
<th>Period of implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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| Create a productive workforce that can make a sustainable contribution to India’s economic development | To enhance youth skill development within the social/public sector          | 1. To create linkages within NSS/NYKS and/or directly with schools/colleges/universities for students to undertake internships/voluntary assignments with organisations working on gender justice  
2. To expose youth to institution building and women’s movements by placing volunteers, including NYCs, within SHGs | 1. Youth exposed to issues pertaining to gender justice and equality      
2. Youth equipped in skills, such as research and documentation, ICT, interpersonal/communication skills, numeracy, advocacy, campaigning, institution/movement building, etc | 1. Number of organisations linked with NSS and NYKS per school/college/university  
2. Number of men, women, LGBTQI members who have undertaken internship/voluntary assignments with organisations working on gender justice and equality and SHGs | Rural/urban  
18–29  
Women, men, members of LGBTQI community | 2017–2020 | NSS/NYKS (NYCs)/schools/colleges/MoRD |

| Develop a strong and healthy generation equipped to take on future challenges | To engage girls and women in sports within villages and slums               | 1. To create structures within village placements within NYKS (NYC)/NSS to organise sports days/tournaments for girls, women and members of the LGBTQI community across identity lines, including, age, caste, etc, using facilities and support by the MoYAS | 1. Girls, women and LGBTQI members are visible in public spaces and have opportunities to participate in sports  
2. Youth develop skills to organise sports events | 1. Number of women, girls, members of the LGBTQI community participate in sports organised by NSS/NYKS  
2. Number of sports events held per district for women and LGBTQI members per district | Rural/urban  
15–29  
Women, men, members of LGBTQI community | 2017–2020 | NSS/NYKS (NYC)/MoYAS |

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11 The plan has been drafted as a five-year plan, commencing in 2016 until 2020.

12 The skill development described here is specifically as it relates to gender equality and justice; other skill development has been covered in the thematic paper on Skill Development. At the same time, all of the activities pertaining to this Action Plan do provide exposure and skill building of youth both on gender justice and equality and on particular skills, such as leadership, research and documentation, advocacy, campaigning, communication, numeracy, etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NYP objectives</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<tr>
<td>To engage youth volunteers to undertake review and collate evidence/data on issues facing functionaries of the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), including ASHA workers, Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs)</td>
<td>1. To place volunteers to review, collate evidence on issues facing ICDS functionaries by shadowing them for a period of time 2. To create data/evidence/review in conjunction with women's groups and MoWCD to identify gaps and issues facing the functioning of ICDS workers</td>
<td>1. Youth exposed to issues facing ICDS functionaries and issues pertaining to women's reproductive work/health 2. Additional support provided to MoWCD in reviewing ICDS and improving infrastructure for supporting ICDS functionaries</td>
<td>1. Number of ICDS functionaries shadowed by youth 2. Number of youth shadowing ICDS functionaries 3. Quality of data collected and used by MoWCD</td>
<td>Rural/slums 18–29 Women, men, members of LGBTQI community</td>
<td>2018–2020 (review in 2019)</td>
<td>MWCD/NSS/NYKS</td>
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<td>Instil social values and promote community service to build national ownership</td>
<td>1. Create student gender champions/clubs comprising student gender officers (proportionate number of LGBTQI members, women and men) who receive comprehensive training from women's/LGBTQI organisations within schools/colleges/universities to act as interim points to address grievances and undertake training, gender audits of schools and take lead in gender equality and justice activities 2. Gender champions/clubs to undertake regular audits (one per term minimum) on how gender sensitive their schools/colleges/universities are by assessing whether sexual harassment policies are in place, quality of toilets, infrastructure on site and en route, etc.</td>
<td>1. Students sensitised on gender justice and equality 2. Gender-just and equal environments created in schools/colleges/universities 3. Dialogue and debate created within schools/colleges/universities on gender equality and justice 4. Local communities sensitised on relevant gender justice and equality issues</td>
<td>1. Number of gender champions/cells established in schools/colleges/universities 2. Number of gender officers trained by LGBTQI and women's organisations 3. Number of gender equality and justice trainings held and number of students trained by gender officers within schools/colleges/universities 4. Number of students engaging with gender champions/cells</td>
<td>Rural/urban 15–29 Women, men, members of LGBTQI community</td>
<td>Establish student gender champions/clubs by 2016 (in coordination with MoWCD/MoHRD) (work ongoing)</td>
<td>MoWCD/MoHRD/schools/colleges/universities</td>
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<td>To ensure at least one gender equality audit is undertaken once a year with students</td>
<td>1. Students sensitised on gender justice and equality</td>
<td>5. Number of activities/events hosted by gender champions/clubs</td>
<td>Rural/urban</td>
<td>2018–2020</td>
<td>MoPR/NSS/NYKS</td>
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<td>To create regular spaces for healthy dialogue on gender justice and equality as these occur within schools/colleges/universities, in media and in other areas</td>
<td>2. Gender-just and equal environments created in schools/colleges/universities</td>
<td>6. Number of inter-competitions between schools/colleges/universities held on gender justice and equality with parent/community participation</td>
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<td>To create mechanisms for cross-auditing of school/colleges/universities with gender cells of other schools/colleges/universities</td>
<td>3. Dialogue and debate created within schools/colleges/universities on gender equality and justice</td>
<td>7. Number of volunteers undertaking gender justice and equality exposure training with community</td>
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<td>To create local/city/district competitions of top schools/colleges/universities that are gender sensitive</td>
<td>4. Local communities sensitised on relevant gender justice and equality issues</td>
<td>8. Number of exposure training programmes undertaken by volunteers with community</td>
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<td>Youth volunteers to undertake gender equality and justice exposure training in communities on various issues as relevant to the context of the community</td>
<td>5. Number of activities/events hosted by gender champions/clubs</td>
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<td>6. Number of inter-competitions between schools/colleges/universities held on gender justice and equality with parent/community participation</td>
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<td>7. Number of volunteers undertaking gender justice and equality exposure training with community</td>
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<td>Facilitate participation and civic engagement at all levels of governance</td>
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<td>To link gender champions/clubs with gender equality and justice organisations working on advocacy to gain exposure on engaging with public sector processes</td>
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<td>To place youth volunteers (including with SHGs, women’s federations) to enhance LGBTQI members and women’s engagement with governance institutions, including panchayats, gram sabhas, local municipal bodies, block and district level offices</td>
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<td>Youth engaged in advocacy and public processes on gender equality and justice</td>
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<td>2. Youth volunteers support/facilitate LGBTQI members’ and women’s engagement with local governance institutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rural/urban</td>
<td>15–29</td>
<td>Women, men, members of LGBTQI community</td>
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### NYP objectives

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| Support youth at risk and create equitable opportunity for all disadvantaged and marginalised youth | 1. To create gender-just and equal infrastructure in youth volunteerism, including training NSS/NYKS/MoYAS staff/teachers, etc., creation of gender champions/clubs within these institutions and ensure gender audits of their work, including internal policies and external activities  
2. Ensure quotas and adequate/proportionate representation of minority women, including physically challenged women, Dalit, Muslim women and women from the northeast and members of the LGBTQI community in all of the above  
3. To ensure gender justice and equality training understands power dynamics across identity lines  
4. To ensure field activities create proactive action to reach out to marginalised women and groups, that is, to reach out to Anganwadis based in Dalit localities  
5. To create infrastructure, such as car-pooling/public transport to ensure women's participation in volunteerism  
6. To create mechanisms for volunteers to give feedback on their experiences – what went right? And how future experiences can be improved | 1. Marginalised and minority women and LGBTQI members engaged in youth volunteerism  
2. National Youth Action Plan proactively ensures activities on gender justice and equality also include activities concerning marginalised and minority women and LGBTQI members | 1. Number of NSS/NYKS/MoYAS staff trained in gender equality and justice  
2. Number of gender cells established within NSS/NYKS/MoYAS  
3. Regular gender audits undertaken of NSS/NYKS/MoYAS  
4. Number of women and LGBTQI members (including marginalised groups) engaged in youth volunteerism opportunities  
5. Number of activities undertaken on issues concerning marginalised women | Rural/urban  
15–29  
Women, men, members of LGBTQI community | 2016–2020/ cross-cutting | MoWCD/ MoHRD/MoYAS/ NSS/NYKS |

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Since this thematic paper pertains to supporting youth at risk and creating equitable participation of marginalised groups including women (which also includes marginalised women and LGBTQI members), the activities outlined here are meant to be cross-cutting and apply to all other categories.
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