



# Meghalaya Youth Policy 2021

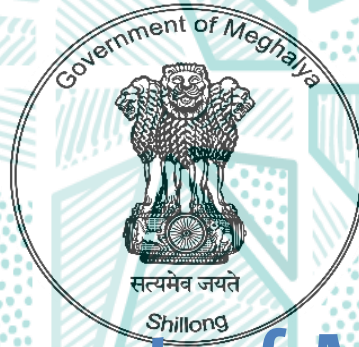
Department of Sports & Youth Affairs  
Government of Meghalaya



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# Government of Meghalaya Meghalaya Youth Policy 2021

## **Acknowledgements**

The Meghalaya Youth Policy 2021 has been drafted by the Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Meghalaya keeping in mind that there are numerous stakeholders in the State working towards the development and empowerment of the Youth and one of the key objectives of the Meghalaya Youth Policy were to collaborate, partner and align with all the stakeholders working for the youth. The Meghalaya Youth Policy 2021 Document has been developed after conducting consultation workshops and deliberation meetings with the Deputy Commissioners, the various government departments- the Health and Family Welfare Department, Social Welfare Department, Education Department, Labour Department, Planning Department, Department of Commerce & Industries, Arts & Culture Department, Tourism Department, Forest Department, IT Department- and external agencies and bodies such as IIM, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Ernst & Young LLP.

The National Youth Policy released in 2014 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India which defines the Vision of the Government of India for the Youth of the Country was referred to whilst drafting the Meghalaya State Youth Policy. References were also made to several international youth policies, youth strategies and youth development frameworks.

A State-wide Youth survey was launched on the website of the Sports & Youth Affairs Department Government of Meghalaya where in over 500 young people aged between 15-29 participated. Their submissions have been vital to understand the perspective of the youth in the State and the critical areas that require focus and improvement. The policy document has been drafted keeping in mind the submissions of the youth.

The Youth Policy is a result of the vision and unwavering leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Hon'ble Sports and Youth Affairs Minister for nurturing and empowering the youth of the State for them to realise their full potential.

**Dr. D. Vijay Kumar, IAS**  
Commissioner and Secretary  
Sports & Youth Affairs Department  
Government of Meghalaya

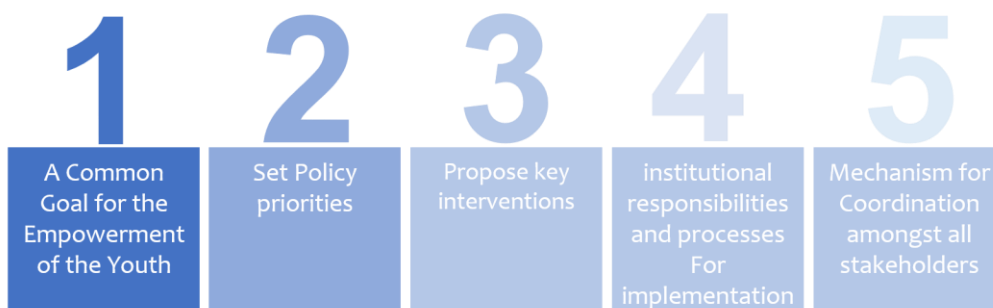
# Chapter 1

## a. Introduction and Rationale

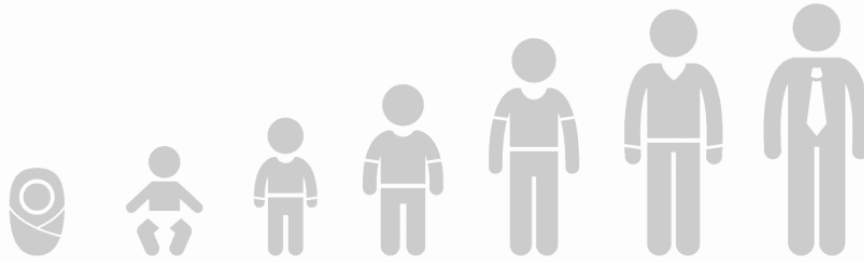
The development of a society is a function of the many ways in which youth are nurtured. Young people in the State are a major human resource for development and could be key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Thus, making it imperative to prepare young people as future leaders, guardians, advocates, entrepreneurs, and custodians of the State by addressing their needs and aspirations. In recognising this, the Government proposes to conceptualise and implement several targeted interventions focused on various critical facets that affect the youth, thus ensuring that all young people get opportunities to grow in an enabling environment, develop and prosper as fully engaged, responsive and productive citizens.

Youth constitute a unique group representing a positive force with the enormous potential to contribute to development. However, as they transit through the major stage of moving from the dependency of childhood to the autonomy and responsibility of adulthood, they are faced with many aspects of vulnerability. In contrast to their parents, young people in Meghalaya, today grow up in a different and complex world because of globalisation and the rapid spread of mass communication, multimedia, changing global economy, global violence and increasing access to drugs and alcohol. Young people are most at risk from major socio-economic challenges including unemployment, low income, physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse, crime and violence and a wide range of health issues, reproductive health with young women being most disadvantaged. Given the range of issues that impact the youth, there is a need for synergized efforts in the planning, implementation and evaluation of youth programmes so that young people can have a future by choice, not by chance.

The Policy addresses major concerns and issues critical for the youth of Meghalaya and seeks to provide direction to youth programmes and services provided by governmental, intergovernmental, private, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and youth organisations (YO). As a strategic document, the Policy will provide:



## b. Definition & Classification of Youth



Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly about education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to as a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education and finding his/her first job.

The National Youth Policy released by the Ministry of Youth & Sports Affairs, Government of India classifies youth between the age of 15-29 years and the United Nations Youth Strategy classifies youth between the age of 15 - 24 Years. Following the National Youth Policy, this policy also defines youth as individuals in the age group of 15-29 years. As per latest estimates, this age group has a population of over 11 Lakhs (refer Annexure I) and constitutes 30.6 percent of the State's population.

However, the Government also realizes that the emotional, social and physical development of young children has a direct effect on their overall development and on the adults they will become. Hence the need to invest in very young children is crucial to maximize their future well-being. Children's early experiences such as the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences deeply affect their future physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Optimizing the early years of children's lives is the best investment that can be made to ensure their future success. Realizing this, the policy takes a broader view in defining its target group as individuals belonging to the age group of 5 to 29 years. The population in this age group is about 19.9 lakhs, (refer Annexure I), constituting 54.8 percent of the State's population. While the primary focus remains on youth (belonging to ages of 15-29 years), critical issues and programs relating to the age group of 5-14 years will also be emphasised and made part of the overall youth development framework.

The Government also realizes that youth do not constitute a monolithic or a homogeneous group. Depending on their life situation and background their needs, and consequently the interventions required to empower them, vary. This calls for different strategies for different groups of young people based on their specific needs. The interventions proposed look into the following categories of youth.

- ▶ Students and non-students.
- ▶ Rural and Urban
- ▶ Male and Female
- ▶ Ethnic and religious minority Youth
- ▶ Socially and economically disadvantaged youth
- ▶ Differently abled youth
- ▶ Vulnerable Youth
- ▶ Migrant/Emigrant Youth

## c. Guiding Principles of the Policy

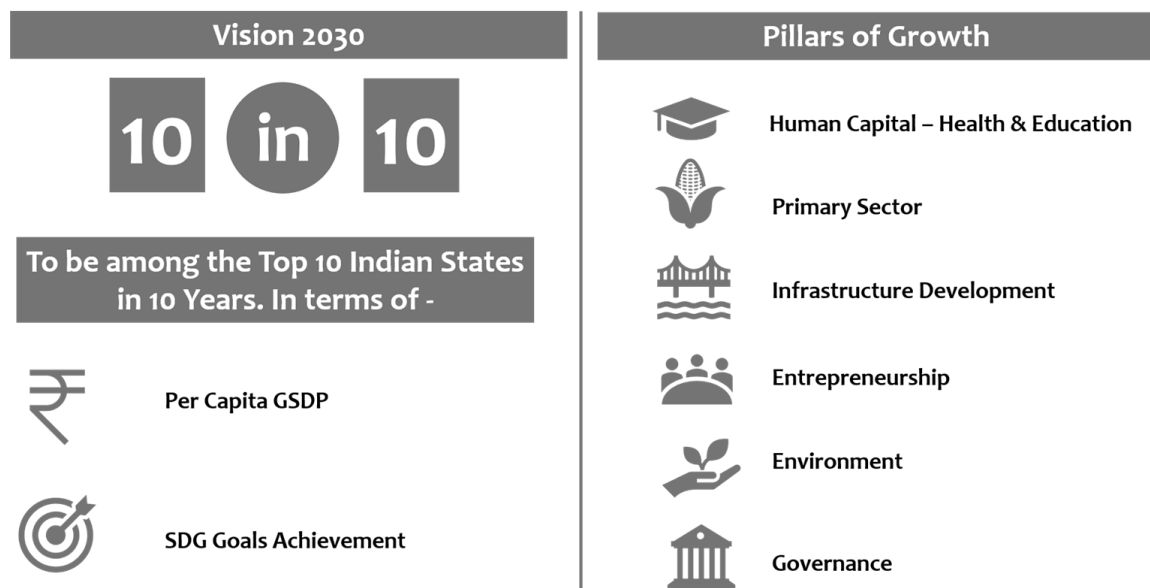
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- 1 Inclusive**  
Ensuring equal opportunities the youth to achieve their full potential in life, elimination of barriers to inclusion, enabling civic participation of all young people.
  - 2 Participatory**  
Designed, developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated with the meaningful participation of young people.
  - 3 Gender Responsive**  
Enabling specific actions to promote gender equity and to address gender-based disparities in all settings, from political to socio-economic and cultural.
  - 4 Comprehensive**  
Adopting a holistic approach to youth development, through increased collaboration across policy sectors, ministries and other relevant entities.
  - 5 Equity and Accessibility**  
Adopting principles of equal opportunity and equitable distribution of programmes, services and resources.
  - 6 Integration & Holistic Development**  
Adopting an integrated, cross-sectoral and an interdisciplinary approach to the issues of youth development and the mainstreaming of youth issues within State goals and programmes.

## Chapter 2

### a. State Vision & Policy Vision

Meghalaya's population is estimated to be around 36.31 Lakhs of which over 70 percent i.e. 27.08 Lakhs are under the age of 35 years (Age wise demographics are at Annexure I). This large section of young people need to be inspired and empowered to realize their full potential as individuals and members of their communities.

The State's Vision for the decade 2020-30 is to become one of the Top Ten States in the country in terms of per capita income and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.



The youth of the State will, naturally, play a pre-eminent role in achieving this vision. This policy lays out the systematic framework for youth engagement that endeavours to ensure all young men and women get support and meaningful opportunities to reach their full potential as they actively participate in society.

The State Youth Policy is an acknowledgement of the specific needs of young women and men, as well as a formal recognition of their unique contribution to State development. It provides a means and a symbol for the State as a whole to declare, commit, invest and engage in translating the vision of the policy 'A sustainable, dynamic, secure, peaceful and prosperous future for our Youth' into a reality. It provides an opportunity to give expression to the State's understanding of values, rights and responsibilities as regard to young women and men. It provides the overarching vision for all programmes and activities relating to youth in the State.



## b. Objectives of the Policy



Foster in young people an abiding commitment to the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of the country and a spirit of community service and Nationalism.



Integrate youth development into the development agenda, policies, and programmes of the State at different levels.



Promote a commitment in young people to protect ecology and the environment.



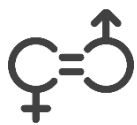
Make young people economically self-reliant and productive members of the society through access to holistic and quality education, training, skill and entrepreneurship development.



Ensure equitable access to health, nutrition, sports (including indigenous sports) and recreation opportunities for all sections of youth population.



Make youth active partners in eliminating all forms of discrimination and injustice, especially against socially and economically disadvantaged sections of the society.



Promote and ensure gender equality.



Address the special needs of marginalised and vulnerable youth.



Ensure effective and meaningful participation of youth in the process of formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes that impact their life.

# Chapter 3

## a. Perspective of the Meghalayan Youth

The Government of Meghalaya launched an online survey to capture the present scenario and perception of the youth. Over 500 individuals aged between 15-29 years participated in the survey. Some of the key survey findings are as under:



## b. Thrust Areas for Intervention

Thrust areas for action emanate from the vision and objectives enunciated under the Policy. These thrust areas are identified with specific reference to the situation obtaining in a State and resources, both human and material, available. The youth development framework for the State, will be built around the following eight thrust areas:



While some of the thrust areas and the proposed interventions around these thrust areas are independent of each other, others are interrelated and intrinsically linked. For example, the lack of the requisite skills and attributes required for attaining gainful employment is linked with lack of good quality education. Investing in one area affects other priority areas as well thereby creating a multiplier effect in the lives of young people.

## **Thrust Area 1 - Early Interventions**

Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, and health. The experiences children have in their early childhood, particularly in the 0-6 age group, shapes their brain and their capacity to learn, to get along with others, and to respond to daily stresses and challenges. Strengthening the foundations of all stages of childhood development for all children in the State is critical to ensure that the children have a strong start. Early intervention works not only to prevent future problems such as substance abuse and criminal behaviour, but also to create the conditions that enable all young people in the State to maximise the opportunities available to them.

### **Present Scenario**

Early childhood care is being provided through a network of around 5,900 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). These encapsulate integrated provisions for health, nutrition and stimulation to support cognitive, physical, motor, emotional and socio-personal development.

The critical health indicators, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) are at around 32.3 deaths per 1,000 live births and at around 203 per 1,00,000 live births respectively. These are higher than the national averages and have been a cause of concern.

Accordingly, several health-related interventions are being undertaken including the Meghalaya's Outcome based Transformation in Health, Education, nutrition and Rural Development (MOTHER) program, which was launched to track the health of all the pregnant women and to promote institutional deliveries in the State. Consequently, the institutional deliveries in the State have already gone up from around 45% to 58% during the last two years. Given the success and the positive response that the program has garnered, it is being expanded to measure outcomes related to education and nutrition as well.

### **Future Imperatives**

#### **1. Early Childhood Development**

The State Government will launch an 'Early Childhood Education Mission' to focus on the early development of every child in the age group of 0-8 years. Meghalaya will be one of the few States to have a comprehensive policy of empowering children right from the age of conception, till they enter school. The Government wants to ensure that every child gets high quality early childhood education and care that includes language, cognitive, socio-personal, emotional, creative and aesthetic appreciation.

One of the main strategies being worked out under this mission is to convert the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) into full-fledged early childhood care and learning centres. At these AWCs, systematic training and coaching will be provided to unlock the potential of children and their parents so as to build the cognitive and executive functioning skills of children during the formative years

## **Thrust Area 2 – Education**

Education is a top priority and has a bearing on everything from life-skills, employment to health. Important years of a young person’s development are spent in school. During the formative years of life, adolescents also need critical knowledge and skills to manage physical, mental and social changes. The life skills based adolescent sexual and reproductive health education also helps adolescents to manage changes experienced during adolescence.

### **Present Scenario**

The current generation of youth is the best-educated so far, however, the quality of education and its capacity to prepare young people for the employment market remain major concerns. With a total literacy rate of 75.5 % as per the 2011 consensus, the State is at par with the national average. The dropout rates in Meghalaya at both the primary and upper primary levels stands at around 17.5% and are higher than the national averages of 6.4 % and 5.7% respectively. Many parents in the State are still unable to send their children for higher education because of localized socio- economic conditions.

Further, the Government has completed the exercise of GIS mapping of all the 14,669 schools in the State. The renovation of existing infrastructure and addition of classrooms has been completed for around 260 Primary Schools. Along with these, the upgradation of 79 Upper Primary Schools to Secondary Schools has also been completed under the Samagra Siksha Abhiyan. The Government has also ensured the completion of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded ‘Supporting Human Capital Development in Meghalaya’ in 117 schools.

### **Future Imperatives**

#### **1. State Education Policy**

As part of the State Education Policy, the Government is set to systematically expand the higher and technical education infrastructure, Institutionalise Career Counselling and Vocational Skills Training in the school education system and strengthen existing employment-oriented training.

#### **2. Infrastructure Upgradation**

Infrastructure upgradation at all government primary and secondary educational institutions will be undertaken in a systematic manner in three years.

#### **3. Technological Transformation**

Inclusion of outdoor learning and modern technology, systematic development of ICT infrastructure and virtual smart classrooms across all educational institutions across all the districts of the State shall be taken up.

## Thrust Area 3 - Health & Wellbeing

Young people are living, learning and negotiating transitions into adulthood in an increasingly complex and challenging world. Improving the health and well-being of adolescents and youth is crucial for their well-being today and for their future economic productivity. Behaviour and health developed during these stages of life are key predictors of the adult burden of disease.

### Present Scenario

Meghalaya has come a long way in improving citizens' health status in the last 25 years, yet there are aspects that need improvement; for instance, at 44%, the stunting among children is higher than the national average of 38%; at 56%, the percentage of anaemic women is also higher than the national average. As per the 2021-26 report of the Fifteenth Finance Commission, the State has a shortfall of 42 Sub Centres, 5 Primary Health Centres and another 10 Community Health Centres. Additionally, many existing health institutions lack adequate infrastructure.

Accordingly, the Government has taken up several initiatives and programmes for the improvement of the overall health care in the State. The National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) has been taken up for providing mental health services including prevention, promotion and long-term continuing care by augmenting the institutional capacity in the State.

The Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), that aims to screen children from 0-18 years on Health Conditions relating to the 4Ds namely Defects at Birth, Diseases, Deficiencies, and Developmental Delays, enrolled in Anganwadi Centres and Govt and Govt aided schools in all districts of the State, is also underway.

The Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), which specifically targets the 10-19 years age group is also being implemented with a focus on six priority areas - Reproductive & Sexual Health, Non-Communicable Diseases, Mental Health, Nutrition, Injuries & Gender Based Violence and Drugs Misuse.

### Future Imperatives

#### 1. Infrastructure Upgradation

The upgradation of physical infrastructure is planned at all the 659 Health Centres including District Hospitals, PHCs, CHCs and sub-centres.

#### 2. Augmenting Counselling Centres

The State Government through various Departments namely Social Welfare, Health & Family Welfare, Education etc. shall also put in concentrated and structured effort for enhancing and strengthening existing counselling centres for families for dealing with issues of raising a child and other support services to families and children. Clinical Psychologists and Social Workers of the NHMP have already been empanelled with the 14410 State Helpline where a caller in need of psycho-social care is connected for any needed mental health care assistance.

#### 3. Fit India Movement

Leveraging the Government of India's 'Fit India Movement' campaign, the State shall ensure mass participation of youth in various sports and physical activities programmes and campaigns, including walkathon, cyclothon, Fit India School weeks, Yoga Seminars, rope skipping workshops, Dance Fitness weeks, Aerobics, Plogging run's etc.

## **Thrust Area 4 - Skill Development, Employment, Entrepreneurship**

With the lack of industrial sector, underdeveloped agriculture and small size of the service sector, employment opportunities are limited in the State. It is therefore imperative that the Government takes effective measures for enhancing access to employment opportunities that match the abilities of young people.

There is also a need to nurture entrepreneurship among the youth and enable them to access credit and technology, and promote business and employment opportunities in the State. There is a large population of dropout youth, and many of them opt for vocational training to join the skilled workforce. However, there lies a huge untapped potential for young people to enter a traditional trade and improve their chances of engagement with long-term employment including self-employment and entrepreneurship.

### **Present Scenario**

Despite significant improvements in enhancing vocational skills and employment opportunities, underemployment and unemployment remain persistent challenges. The Government is presently implementing several programmes and schemes for the skill development, upskilling and employment generation for the youth of the State. These include the establishment of the 'Meghalaya State Employment Promotion Council', the 'Meghalaya State Skill Development Society' (MSSDS) which work towards enhancing the skill sets of the youth.

Various Government Departments such as the Agriculture Department, Community & Rural Development Department, Commerce and Industries Department, Education Department, IT Department, Labour & Employment Department, etc., also undertake industry specific capacity building and upskilling workshops and programmes.

### **Future Imperatives**

#### **1. Prime Hubs**

The State's flagship entrepreneurship promotion program called PRIME (Promotion and Incubation of Market Driven Enterprise) is being implemented across the State. Three PRIME Hubs are already functional and another 15 will be made functional this year. Entrepreneurs in the sectors of food processing, craft and new and emerging technologies are being supported. These hubs will also double up as youth clubs and libraries and function as a vibrant space for the youth to drop in to avail any of the services offered to them in regards to health and wellbeing, skill development, counselling, volunteering and employment opportunities etc.

#### **2. Start-up Fellowships**

Fellowships provide an opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs to work on their ideas and to prototype. To encourage and support such young entrepreneurs, start-up fellowships that provide for a monthly stipend for 12 months will be institutionalized.

#### **3. State Skills Registry**

A digital State Skills Registry shall be developed. Listing of skilled and unskilled workers in the State is presently unstructured and unorganised. There is no organised listing/platform/mobile application/website/portal available in the State that bridges the gap between the supply and demand of various works and services. The skill registry will be an online portal/mobile application which mobilises, validates and lists various services and works offered by the available skilled and unskilled workers in the State. The Portal/mobile application shall be equipped to act as a forum for the customers to make digital payments directly to the listed skill workers.

**4. Meghalaya One Skill Programme**

The State seeks to launch a holistic skill development program, under which every youth will be supported to take up nurture one skill or talent, through provision of skill vouchers. Service providers from within the State will be empanelled and will provide the skills. This program will enable large scale and systematic skilling of youth, both in life skills and in skills for jobs. It will also ensure employment for the skill providers and strengthen community bonds.

**5. Financial Support to Entrepreneurs**

Start-up grants, scale up Zero-interest loans and bank linkage support will be provided to entrepreneurs, with specific focus on sectors of Food Processing, Arts and Crafts, travel and hospitality. A corpus fund and a transparent process for provision of this support will be put in place.

**6. Awards & Recognition**

Competitions for identification and recognition of entrepreneurs will be institutionalized. The Chief Minister's e-Championship Challenge will be made an annual event, along with the Chief Minister's Entrepreneur of the month program.



## **Thrust Area 5 Excellence through sport**

Recognition of the contribution of sport-based approaches can make to development, and peace-building objectives have grown markedly over the last ten years. Sport teaches one the importance of cultural identities in a language which exists outside the boundaries of race and religion. Sport provides a platform, shaped by the intrinsic values of fair play, non-discrimination, respect for others, respect for rules, and teamwork, to promote and protect diversity. Sport has the power to unify diverse populations, offering a neutral “playing field” encouraging dialogue and understanding between people. The participation of athletes from Meghalaya in major games and competitions in Regional, National and International sports events and successful organisation of South Asian Games (SAG) in collaboration with the Government of Assam demonstrate the capability of the State.

### **Present Scenario**

The State Government released the State Sports Policy in 2019 aiming at promoting participation in Sports with an aspiration of achieving competitive excellence and positioning the State as a leading sporting State in the country.

The Meghalaya Games were organised in 2019-20 which featured over 2,000 athletes from all the districts in the State.

The Government of Meghalaya is presently implementing several schemes and programmes for the youth in the State such as the Chief Minister's Youth Development Scheme (CMYDS), Intensive Sports and Youth Development Programme (ISYDP) aimed at upskilling the youth, inculcating the spirit of good citizenship and identification and development of grassroot level talent, organisation of youth camps, youth awards, youth leadership training, youth exchange programmes to develop various attributes and characteristics

### **Future Imperatives**

#### **1. Development & Augmentation of Sports Infrastructure**

The State Government will work towards development and upgradation of core Infrastructure and grassroot Infrastructure in a phased manner. Major sporting facilities are already being built and upgraded. These include the construction of the P.A. Sangma integrated sports complex at Tura, the upgradation of the J.N. Stadium at Shillong and the construction of a football stadium at Wahajjer, West Jaintia Hills.

#### **2. Structured Talent Identification and Development**

A systematic framework for the identification and nurturing of talent will be put in place following the principle of ‘Right Talent for Right Sport.’ This will comprise the setting up of district level talent identification committees, mobilisation of scouts, partnering with State, national and international sports bodies and implementation of global standards of talent identification and development.

#### **3. Awards & Recognition**

Institutionalisation of Competitions and Awards will be done. These include the Chief Minister's Sports Person of the Month Award, Meghalaya Games, State-run sports leagues in Olympic sports disciplines, systematic implementation of the State sports policy with focused emphasis on cash awards for merit achieving athletes, pension for sports persons, lifetime achievement awards, sports quota in educational institutions, sports quota for class 1 - class 3 officer level government jobs.

## Thrust Area 6 - Creativity through Arts

Culture has the power to transform entire societies, strengthen local communities and forge a sense of identity and belonging for people of all ages. As a vector for youth development and civic engagement, culture plays an essential role in promoting sustainable social and economic development for future generations. Youth can act as a bridge between cultures and serve as key agents in promoting peace and intercultural understanding.

The benefits of creative self-expression are many—from increasing young people’s problem-solving ability to stimulating their community involvement; from fostering teamwork to strengthening self-confidence. Creativity also contributes to society at large —fostering new approaches to solving old problems. One of the greatest advantages of arts-based approaches is sparking young people’s active involvement in youth-serving programs. Arts-based programs not only benefit those young people who participate, but their peers, parents, and community members who attend performances, watch plays, and behold exhibitions of youth produced arts.

### Present Scenario

The Intensive Arts and Culture Development Programme (I.A.C.D.P.) is implemented with an objective to promote indigenous folk, tribal arts, culture and vanishing art forms in the field of music, dance and drama. The State government provides financial aid to various voluntary cultural organisations, budding authors developing Khasi and Garo Literature, deserving artistes, artisans

### Future Imperatives

- 1. Promoting arts and crafts as alternate livelihoods**  
The State Government shall take concentrated measures to encourage and incentivise young people to take up arts and crafts as a viable and sustainable means of livelihood by providing them technical and financial support.
- 2. Awards and Recognition**  
Institutionalization of scholarships, State level awards and recognition in Music, Arts and Crafts, State level and national level cultural events, festivals and exhibitions will be undertaken.
- 3. Academies of Excellence**  
Academies of Excellence for the promotion of visual and performing arts with special emphasis on Music will be set up.

## **Thrust Area 7 - Leadership, Inclusion & Engagement**

The National Youth Policy outlines that there are a number of youth at risk and marginalised youth who require special attention in order to ensure that they can access and benefit from various government programmes and schemes. These youth can broadly be categorised under Socially and economically disadvantaged youth, migrant youth and women, out-of-school or drop-outs from the formal educational mainstream, youth living with disability or suffering from chronic diseases, youth at risk, including but not limited to youth suffering from substance abuse, youth at risk of human trafficking and youth working in hazardous occupations, sex workers, youth that suffer from social or moral stigma including but not limited to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth, youth infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, youth in institutional care, orphanages, correctional homes and prisons.

To ensure that the youth of the State are socially included and empowered, it is imperative that structured opportunities are made available to them to voice their opinions and ideas on various topics and subjects.

### **Present Scenario**

Programmes for promoting youth leadership and cultural exchange are being currently implemented in the State through various government departments. A recent State survey launched to capture the perspective of the youth revealed that young people wanted a more active role in shaping major government decisions and a reduction in the complexity of government systems.

### **Future Imperatives**

#### **1. Institutionalisation of Engagement Mechanisms**

Creation of digital platforms with institutionalised calendar of seminars, debates, webinars for youth engagement on issues and topics that concern the youth where the youth could put forward their opinions and thought processes. Organisation of international and domestic exposure trips will also be prioritized.

#### **2. Structured Calendar of Volunteering Opportunities**

Institutionalisation of volunteering opportunities for the youth in various development initiatives and programs. This would primarily be focussed around providing urban youth the opportunities to volunteer in rural areas.

#### **3. Youth Portal and helpline**

A Portal that provides information and access to all the youth related services being provided by various government and non-government agencies will be set up. Additionally, a dedicated 24/7 helpline that will be a one stop shop for all matters that affect the youth will be set up.

## **Thrust Area 8 - Environmental Consciousness & Social Responsibility**

Meghalaya has a rich natural heritage. Initiatives like sacred groves, community and village reserves, fish sanctuaries and living root bridges are testaments to the importance of environmental consciousness in the society. However, there are currently a number of environmental concerns including deforestation, soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, changing rainfall patterns and contamination of water bodies.

Promotion of environmental education and spreading knowledge and awareness amongst the youth will enable them to deal effectively with environmental issues.

### **Present Scenario**

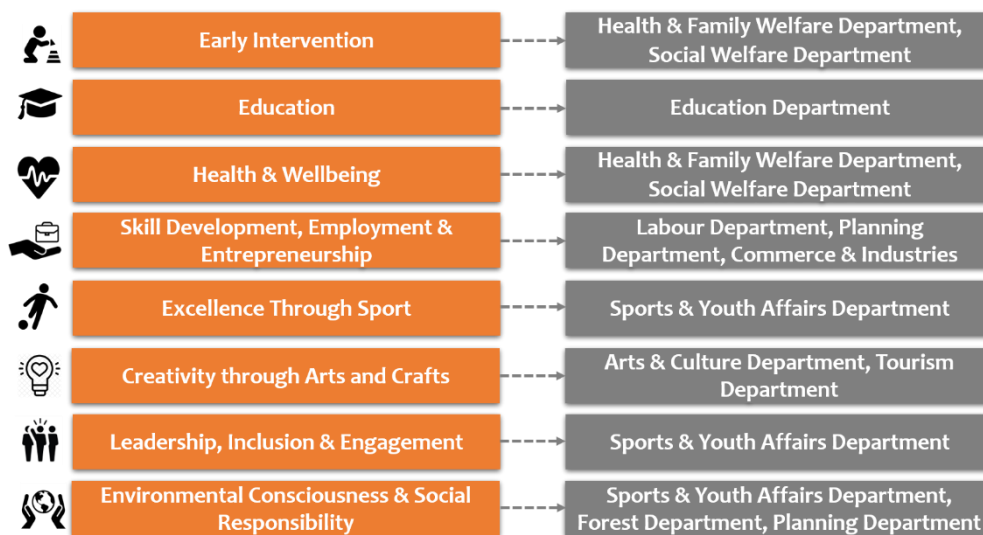
The State has prioritized environmental protection and sustainability. In addition to the various departmental programs, sustainability focussed externally aided projects are being implemented with funding support from multi-lateral agencies.

### **Future Imperatives**

- 1. Environment Conservation Youth Cadres**  
Environment Conservation Youth Cadres will be identified in each village of the State. These cadres will be empowered with knowledge and technology to be able to make an impact in their communities.
- 2. Fellowships for environmental conservation**  
Youth who are focussed on protecting and promoting the natural heritage of the State will be incentivized through fellowships and exposure to global best practices.

## c. Implementation and Coordination Mechanism

This policy outlines broad parameters for planning programmes, schemes and initiatives for the youth in the State. The various Initiatives and programmes directed towards youth development and rejuvenation under the identified thrust and intervention areas will fall under the purview of several State government departments:



The Sports & Youth Affairs Department shall be the Nodal Department to coordinate the various initiatives under the policy and will establish an appropriate implementation and coordination mechanism.

A high-powered committee chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and comprising of all Cabinet Ministers, senior officials and other eminent individuals will be formed to be the apex agency for driving the policy execution. The Mandate of the Committee shall be to:

1. Provide future direction and setting an annual action plan and a perspective plan
2. Periodic Review the implementation of policy interventions
3. Mobilisation of funds and resources for Interventions and Programmes

For the implementation of the various interventions and programmes under the identified thrust areas, an implementation committee shall be formed with the undermentioned members:

S.NO	Member	Designation	Mandate
1	Chief Secretary	Chairman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Coordinating the various program interventions.</li> <li>▶ Development of the key performance indicators</li> <li>▶ Development of Annual work plans under each thrust area</li> </ul>
2	Commissioner & Secretary Sports & Youth Affairs	Member	
3	Commissioner & Secretary Health & Family Welfare	Member	
4	Commissioner & Secretary Social Welfare	Member	
5	Commissioner & Secretary Education	Member	
6	Commissioner & Secretary Labour	Member	
7	Commissioner & Secretary Planning	Member	
8	Commissioner & Secretary Commerce & Industries	Member	
9	Commissioner & Secretary of Arts & Culture	Member	
10	Commissioner & Secretary Tourism	Member	
11	Commissioner & Secretary Forest & Environment	Member	
12	Commissioner & Secretary IT & Communications	Member	
13	Commissioner & Secretary Finance	Member	
14	Director, Sports & Youth Affairs	Convenor	

## **d. Monitoring & Evaluation**

A monitoring and evaluation framework shall be developed to track progress of the interventions/programmes/schemes under each thrust area and to present findings to the implementation and high-powered committee in a timely manner for taking mid-course corrections. The key performance indicators will be regularly generated by data collection, compilation and analysis by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs.

The Evaluation of the various programs taken up under the aegis of the policy will be undertaken through credible agencies once every two years. The findings of the evaluation shall form the basis for recalibrating the programs and designing newer interventions, if required.

The policy will be comprehensively reviewed after 5 years.

## Annexures

### a. Annexure 1.0 - Age wise youth population in Meghalaya as per the Department of Statistics and Economics 2019

Sl.No	Age Group	2001	2011	2019 * Projected population
1	0-4	324566	406154	486045
2	5-9 years	337157	389182	436686
3	10-14 years	319154	382606	442342
4	15-19-years	249780	326188	403675
5	20-24 years	195187	285012	385878
6	25-29 years	184137	251281	322293
7	30-34 years	147732	189657	231620
8	35-39 years	151079	174706	196185
9	40-44 years	103535	145450	190939
10	45-49 years	90705	123115	157174
11	50-54 years	63787	88743	117401
12	55-59 years	43117	60109	78421
13	60-64 years	39326	50708	62121
14	65-69 years	26664	35774	45247
15	70-74 years	18797	23698	28515
16	75-79 years	9696	12845	16083
17	80 +	11243	15254	19474
18	Age not stated	3160	6407	11275
<b>Total</b>		<b>2318822</b>	<b>2966889</b>	<b>3631372</b>