# CHAPTER 3

# THE CURRENT STATUS OF YOUTH WORK

## 3.1   INTRODUCTION

Although the main focus of this study is on the South African context, it comprises a detailed analysis of the situations at international and regional level. The researcher sees the aim of this study as also targeted at contributing to debates on Youth work in these contexts. In this chapter, the researcher looks at the current status of Youth work at international, regional and national levels. This is crucial to the achievement of one of the objectives of this study, namely: to identify, explore and analyse the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work as a new field of practice in South Africa and to describe the scope and nature of services involved.

In light of the foregoing, the factors that led to evolution of Youth work are described in order to: understand the origin, assess the current status in relation to the influences of the past, and examine tasks that still need to be carried out in the present in order to determine the future (Kelly, 1990:168, 175; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187). Understanding the local and regional situations of youth is important and has implications for social and economic development in the world today (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:9).

## 3.2   THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

In this section, the researcher looks at the origin as well as the current state of Youth work internationally to ensure that whatever action is taken in South Africa is aligned to global trends. The international outlook is a consequence of a "*borderless world*" and "*global village*" for which youth are poised than ever before to participate in and benefit from (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2; May & Powell, 2008:265).

The review of literature shows that, evolution of Youth work dates as far back as the nineteenth century and primarily came as a result of concerns over population trends

that illustrated an increase of youth population at an increasing rate as compared to other population groupings. This trend was supported by complexity and uniqueness of the various problems facing youth such as unemployment and poverty, industrial revolution, urbanisation, immigration work with street children, and the changing nature of family life (Broadbent, 2006:52; Maunders, 2003:14; Ryan, 2003:53-54). This led to a collapse of traditional roles played by young people. It was the lack of replacement roles that reflected in panics about problems such as juvenile delinquency.

Of further interest is that, even though young people aged between 15 and 24 make up 25% of the global working age population, their share in total unemployment is 43.7% (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:13). All these factors led to a further key concern about the time youth spent outside work (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:53; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:53).

Subsequent to that, there was a rise in the use of a youth development approach by professionals and volunteers working with young people on day to day basis in other settings and contexts other than schools. Those workers engaged young people in activities that focused on morality, welfare, recreation and leisure, thus causing a reaction amongst youth to debate and raise their voices at different fora (*Encyclopaedia of Social Work*, 1995:2561; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:xi; Ryan, 2003:52).

As the focus on youth development intensified, it resulted in evolution of youth development movements such as Salvation Army, Boys Brigade, Young Men's Christian Association, Girls guides, scouts; which derived their legitimacy from local communities (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:13; Maunders, 2006:31). Those movements introduced youth focused interventions and programmes which were intended to protect the poor deprived youth and to organise their leisure and recreation activities in order to assist them to cope with the problems they were experiencing. The interventions were also intended to support increased allocation of human and financial resources for youth development (Jeffs & Smith, 1990:16; Maunders, 2006:21; Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:38). The activities run by

the above stated movements were often informal and targeted children and youth who could not access formal education due to poverty. The increase in these movements saw intensive utilisation of a youth development approach by professionals in other disciplines as well as emergence of structured Youth work practice by workers dedicated to serving youth in a wide range of settings through individual and systemic change (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:20). This expansion from individuals to systems led workers to become involved with youth in settings such as:

▪ Community Based Organisations, where activities are offered to young people during gap periods such as before and after school and also in weekends; and

▪ institutions like schools, where activities are offered to young people during structured times or schedules.

By the 1960s and 1970s, most governments in developed countries and many youth serving non-profit organisations, particularly religious ones that are still active today, took greater responsibility for the development of young people and became used as vehicles though which activities for young people were delivered (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:5; Sercombe, 2010:31). The commitment and movement towards Youth work practice reached new heights when increasing emphasis was placed on activities such as organising the leisure and recreation activities of the working class adolescents by diverting them from the revolutionary politics (Jeffs & Smith, 1990:16; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:53; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:53, 67).

To date, the Youth work field thus expanded to exist in a variety of settings and under different names, e.g., Youth work, Youth in development practice. The essential aspect is that, young people continue to be recipients of services rendered by wide range of service providers in variety of settings in government as well as civil society organisations and these youth are also being targeted exclusively by dedicated service providers (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94,135; Sercombe, 2010:10). This is necessary in view of world wide support and commitment to advance development of young people (Simmons, 2006:107). For example, the UN GA passed a Resolution that declared the year 1985 as International Year of Youth and also endorsed the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow up in the field of youth; the UN developed a World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) for the Year 2000 and

beyond; the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have youth as their main target; Youth work have since spread as a model of practice in places such as Australia, Europe, USA and United Kingdom (UK); and the UN GA passed Resolution 64/134 proclaiming the year which started on the 12[th]of August 2010 to 12th of August 2011 as the International Year of Youth in December 2009 (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1, 3; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15; Charles, 2006:55; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:1; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:18).

The above stated key developments illustrate the manner in which international communities are engaged in daily revolution to respond to the increasing needs of young people by facilitating change, often with limited resources, support and infrastructure (Krauss & Suandi, 2008:3). Of more relevance to this study is actions related to the future of Youth work such as introduction of training programmes that culminated into formal Youth work qualification, establishment of professional associations, determination of professional standards and industrial conditions, development of a code of ethics and final recognition of Youth work as a registered profession (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice & Child and Youth Care Certification Board, 2010:1; Barnes & Bourdon in Anglin, Delholm, Ferguson & Pence, 1990:304; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray & Foster, 1998:425; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

At the moment, the education and training of Youth work at international level takes place in Europe, Asia, South America, Central America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, USA, and UK. The countries involved in Youth work in these regions include: Canada, Germany, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Netherlands, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, France, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Liechtenstein, Japan and China (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice & Child and Youth Care Certification Board, 2010:1; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15; South African Qualification Authority Act 58 of 1995). For example, in Europe, the University of Malta facilitated establishment of an Institute of Youth Studies to provide a broad based academic course for those interested in working with young people professionally, across the USA, Youth work qualification at a degree level is being

offered in universities such as Clemson University, Michigan State University, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Minnesota (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:81; Malta Ministry of Youth and the Arts, 2010:8). South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) - a structure established to formulate and publish policies for education and training standards or qualification and to accredit bodies responsible for monitoring of such standards or qualification - documented that, whereas Youth work programmes are mostly taught by universities, at certificate/ diploma/ degree level in some countries. However, there are still countries that do not have specific Youth work qualifications in countries such as Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland. In this case, workers with other related qualifications in areas such as Social pedagogy, Social work, and Cultural animation are employed to do Youth work (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

It is important to note that the model for Youth work service provision in most countries is two pronged i.e. it is rendered by service providers exclusively responsible for youth, and also by service providers who target youth as part of their target groups (Broadbent & Corney, 2008: 15; Sercombe, 2010:82). This two-pronged approach is evidenced by establishment of structures such as Youth Ministries and agencies primarily targeting young people as well as mainstreaming of youth development in structures of other professionals such as Police, Social workers, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Community development workers who target the youth and other client groups (Sercombe, 2010:82). For example, in countries such as the Netherlands and Malta, whereas there is evidence of close collaboration between service providers rendering youth services (e.g., Teachers, Sports coaches, and Counsellors), a separate Ministry and/or an agency that is only responsible for youth development is also in existence (Malta, Ministry of Youth and the Arts, 2010:8; Van Kampen, Beker & Wilbrink-Griffioen, 1996:14).

The adoption of this two-pronged approach is a profound reorientation of purpose and shows the seriousness with which youth development is viewed.

## 3.3 THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Available estimates show that in most African countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia, the youth and children constitute above or over 60% of the total population, with young people constituting about a third (30%) (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agenda, 2011:6; African Union Commission, 2010:2). The proportion of this youth population aged 15-35 is projected to peak at 35.6% of the total population by 2030 and despite sub-regional variations, the youth population in Africa will generally remain high by 2050 (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:8).

The demographics in the Africa region clearly indicate that the youth population would continue to grow in absolute numbers. Therefore, addressing youth issues should remain salient for the African governments, particularly considering the fact that the majority of these youth account for the large share of the working population, and the hurdles they experience need to be attended to during their youth period before they enter adulthood (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:15).

However, as a result of continuous challenges they experience, Africa's youth population does not have the opportunity to fully develop its potential and contribute effectively to the realisation of the declared vision and the mission of Africa's leaders as espoused by the African Union (AU). The AU mission aims '*inter alia'* to enhance Africa's leadership role in the promotion of peace, human security and good governance; and also to achieve the central goals of promoting positive change in our societies as espoused by the Commonwealth leaders (Shah, 2007:52).

The 2011 State of the African Youth Report revealed that, a new emergent and integrated Africa can be fully realised only if the bulging youth population is mobilised; equipped to help drive the integration, peace and development agenda; and recognised and utilised as an effective resource (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1). This vision and commitment to address the needs of an increasing youth population, particularly in developing countries, emanates from the conviction that, in addressing national and global challenges, young people as a key population segment of the population need to be

empowered, prioritised, and anchored to become strong and accountable leaders as well as an asset for development in the global arena (African Union Commission, 2010:2; Charles, 2006:46; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:7, 8). It was also on that basis that Charles (2006:45)and Ryan (2003:65) asserted that, the surest approach to developing the human race is to target the youth sector, because they represent the future and therefore ignoring their plight could result in economic, social, and political catastrophe.

As a result of the foregoing, Africa has for over fifty (50) years been involved in a variety of development interventions (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:24), some of which are youth specific. In the centre of the initiatives of both the AU and the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) lies the priority to empower and develop the youth in an effort to address the challenges they experience through development and implementation of policies and programmes, as well as mobilisation and allocation of resources for the same purpose (African Union Commission&United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1, 3; African Union Commission, 2010:1; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:8-10;United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:17-19).

Some of the key youth development interventions include the following:

- **African Youth Charter (AYC)**, adopted and approved by the Heads of States and governments in 2006. The AYC is a comprehensive framework that provides important guidelines and responsibilities for member states in development and empowerment of youth. It addresses amongst other things, the rights and obligations of young people. It also constitutes the social contract of the State to mainstream youth issues in all development policies and programmes;

- **Declaration of the years 2009-2018 as the decade for Youth Development** and approval of a **Plan of Action for the Decade** aimed at implementing the identified youth development priority activities;

- **Declaration of the 1st of November each year as Africa Youth day** to celebrate the achievements and contributions of young people to the continent's development;

- **Revitalisation of the Pan African Youth Union (PYU)** as a vibrant continental youth body that would serve as a focal point for youth engagement and for conveying youth perspectives for integration into national, regional and continental policies, strategies, and programmes;

- **2011 June-July African Union Heads of States and Governments Summit** held under the theme: *"Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development"*, affirming commitment to youth development.

- **New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Strategic Framework for Youth Programme of 2004,** serving as a tool for mainstreaming youth issues;

- **Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP)**, developed to engage and empower young people and enhance their contribution to development processes;

- **Introduction of a qualification in Youth work**, currently offered in more than twenty universities and colleges across the Commonwealth member states dedicated to professionalising Youth work by building a body of specialist knowledge, code of ethics, getting competency standards recognised, and organising Youth workers into professional associations.

The above positive initiatives illustrate the manner in which youth development is prioritised within the African region (African Union Commission, 2010:2; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2). The provision of Youth work qualifications in particular, supports the building of capacity within the sector to enhance effective service provision and practice (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18). Through the CYP, the Commonwealth Secretariat introduced a Diploma in Youth Development Work, currently offered in more than twenty universities and colleges across the member states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; Charles, 2006:45; Maunders, 2006:26).

Table 3.1 below highlights the countries and Institutions offering Commonwealth Youth work qualification in the Commonwealth Africa region:

**Table 3.1: Countries and institutions of higher learning offering the Commonwealth Youth work qualification in the Africa region of the Commonwealth**

| Countries | Institutions of Higher Learning offering Commonwealth *qualification in Youth work* | Programme Status |
|---|---|---|
| Botswana | University of Botswana | 2nd Intake |
| Ghana | University of Ghana | 5th Intake |
| Kenya | University of Nairobi | 3rd Intake |
| Lesotho | National University of Lesotho | 3rd Intake |
| Malawi | University of Malawi | 2nd Intake |
| Namibia | Namibia College of Open Learning | 3rd Intake |
| Nigeria | University of Abuja | 2nd Intake |
| Seychelles | Adult Learning and Distance Education Centre | 1st Intake |
| Sierra Leone | University of Sierra Leone | 2nd Intake |
| South Africa | University of South Africa | 7th Intake |
| Tanzania | Open University of Tanzania | 5th Intake |
| The Gambia | Management Development Institute | 3rd Intake |
| Uganda | Makerere University | 4th Intake |
| Zambia | Zambia Insurance Business College Trust | 3rd Intake |

Source: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010a:18

In addition to the above, countries such as Cameroon, Cyprus, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Swaziland have also been confirmed to be offering a Commonwealth Diploma in Youth work (South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). It is clear that there is greater interest to provide educational opportunities for Youth workers (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:78).

Against the foregoing and in light of the great potential, dynamism, resourcefulness, resiliency, and aspiration of African youth; the majority of the countries in Africa are institutionalising, reforming and repositioning youth development by introducing proactive policies and strategies which provide for establishment of fully fledged structures in the form of youth affairs ministries, youth agencies, youth departments, youth parliaments, and youth councils; thereby increasing interventions aimed at advancing the development and empowerment of young people (Charles, 2006: 51; Shah, 2007:62). These structures prioritise youth development at national level through coordination of youth development interventions aimed at increasing impact.

It is essential that investment in young people is maximised, in order to ensure broad development of the continent, because there is overwhelming evidence which suggests that inadequate investment in youth results in despair, hopelessness, lack of creativity, and poor productivity among the youth (Charles, 2006:45). On the other hand, there is also evidence of the reverse of this process, where increased investments in youth result in social harmony and progress (United Nations Population Fund Agency & African Youth Policy Forum, 2006:10).

In spite of the conducive legislative and policy environment created at national and regional levels, there is overwhelming evidence that major challenges still persist (African Union Commission, 2010:4; United Nations Population Fund Agency & African Youth Policy Forum, 2006:3). These challenges are a result of multiple factors and they manifest themselves in the form of poverty; unemployment; overpopulation; inequalities; lack of skills and relevant education, fragmentation, poor health care services, problems of natural environment, emerging problems such as HIV and AIDS, different levels of development between most African countries; gaps in existing policies, strategies and their lack of effective implementation; and inadequate budgetary allocation to youth programming (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:4). In response to the identified challenges, the regional and national structures continue to push for advancement of the youth development agenda in a manner that addresses the identified challenges.

Having looked back at the journey travelled globally and regionally regarding Youth work, the researcher now examines the situation locally. It is within this context that the next section looks at the status of Youth work in South Africa.

## 3.4   THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT NATIONAL LEVEL

In this section the researcher starts off by looking at the emergence of Youth work as an occupation and explores the history behind that including changes in institutional and coordinating mechanisms that which were in place over time to advance youth development. This is done in recognition of initiatives taken by the South African government to advance empowerment and development of young people. This chapter is then concluded by highlighting the different targeted youth groups serviced by the current institutions and the nature of service offerings available for them.

### 3.4.1 Emergence of Youth work as an occupation

As the years of the Apartheid regime rolled on in South Africa around the 1930s, Blacks attempted to foster unity among themselves by acting against it (*South African Year Book*, 2009:8, 9, 10). That change was marked by evolution of youth formations which inspired the struggle for years that followed. In the 1940s, young people played a central and crucial role in rejecting the white domination when they made a call for action in the form of protests, strikes and demonstrations. This depicted young people as problematic, delinquent, and violent. This picture was further aggravated by the media reports which, even today, continue to stereotype the public by predominantly covering stories which show youth in a negative light (Damon, 2004:14; Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2).

Those years were followed by a decade of turbulent mass action in resistance to the imposition of still harsher forms of segregation and oppression. In the early 1950's, the black political organisations were banned and their leaders and followers, predominantly young, were arrested whilst some went into exile under the armed struggle (Carter, 2010; *South African Year Book*, 2009: 10). The *South African Year Book* further highlights that the 1960s was a decade of overwhelming repression and relative political disarray in the country, because, a wave of strikes reflected a new militancy that involved better organisation and drew new sectors, in particular, intellectuals and the student movements, thus illustrating the key role played by the youth of that era.

During the decade that followed the 1960s, the year 1976 marked the beginning of a sustained anti-Apartheid revolt. In June of that year, the school pupils of Soweto (one of the largest townships in South Africa) rose up against Apartheid education in retaliation against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction (Carter, 2010). This led to youth uprisings all around the country. Many young people, at least – Black, male, urban - put their future on hold in pursuit of the struggle against the Apartheid government that violated their rights, denied them of opportunities to develop, and prohibited them from realising their potential (Everatt, 2000:1; The Presidency, 2009b:7). It was during this period that many organisations started

targeting the youth as their clients. Those rendering services to the youth assumed the role of Youth workers.

The youth continued to leave the country in large numbers as they fled from being arrested. Those who went into exile were further deprived of informal support which was once available to them, because of the changed family and community structures (Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:39). It was only in 1989, that the then President of South Africa, FW de Klerk, announced at the opening of Parliament about the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of political prisoners, including the former President, Mr Nelson Mandela. (Carter, 2010; *South African Year Book*, 2009:11). The Nelson Mandela years saw resistance giving way to, amongst others, youth development efforts geared towards addressing the problems which made youth to be vulnerable to ill conditions such as violence, crime, drug abuse, poverty, unemployment and generally bad tendencies created by the apartheid government (Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:10; The Presidency, 2002:2). Around that time, youth were considered "*marginalised*" and/or a "*lost generation*", because they were often excluded and alienated from society in both social and economic spheres as a result of the country's history of oppression and violence (National Youth Commission, 1997:10; Moeler, Mthembu & Richards, 1994:6). The youth NGOs played an important role in dispelling these negative labels (Everatt, 2000:1).

In pursuit of democratisation and socio-economic change, as well as reconciliation and the building of consensus founded on the commitment to improve the lives of young South Africans, the organisations such as churches as well as youth serving and youth led non-government organisations at national and local level, intensified the youth development agenda and ensured that it secured national prominence (Charles, 2006: 25; *South African Year Book*,2009:12; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:4; Youth Development Network, 2008:7, 8). Those organisations became a common reference group for a substantial proportion of South African youth, because they designed and implemented programmes aimed at developing young people (Moeler, Mthembu & Richards, 1994:24). They succeeded in executing their agenda due to support they received predominantly from international agencies

and foreign countries which strengthened their support for the anti-apartheid cause (Maunders, 2006:17; *South African Year Book*, 2009:15).

However, despite their vulnerabilities to exploitation, the youth had also proved that they can be a dynamic force for good when society is searching for answers. It was on that basis that efforts were made to involve them in meaningful activities that will not only benefit them, but will also benefit their immediate communities (The Presidency, 2009b:10).

Finally, the emergence, expansion, and focus on Youth work as an occupation all over the world and in South Africa, appears to have been largely influenced by political and economic climate aimed at empowering, developing and responding to the concerns and problems experienced by young people, thus ensuring positive contribution to the future growth of the country whilst curbing the potential explosive problems that may emanate as a result of failure to invest in them (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:2; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:1).

It is on that basis that there is a call for involvement and participation of young people in development processes as well as the need for future human resource planning to acknowledge the role of Youth workers in both public and private sectors (Department of Social Development, 2007:1; The Presidency, 2002:71). These would ensure that interventions focus on responding to the needs of youth as the main target group.

### 3.4.2  The institutional mechanisms

Between 1990 and 1993, the national negotiations in South Africa also focused on organising the youth sector. These resulted in the launch of the National Youth Development Forum (NYDF), a non-partisan body that was intended to coordinate and implement youth development interventions such as the National Youth Service, to cohere the fractious youth sector around development rather than political goals as well as to build on the growing sympathy for the youth (Everatt, 2000:8). The author further mentions how the NYDF failed to achieve its mandate, thus resulting in disillusionment of the youth and fragmentation of their sector.

Everatt (2000:11) observed that the years that followed also saw youth being the forgotten group and less prioritised in key policy documents such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). "The gains of the early part of the decade had been lost" with most of the youth led and youth serving organisations loosing sponsorship from donors.

In the context of the above, a significant milestone was reached when the National Youth Commission (NYC) Act No. 19 of 1996 was passed in 1996 as a basis for establishment of the National Youth Commission, a primary statutory institution for youth development in the country (Everatt, 2000:11; National Youth Commission, 1997:2). The NYC was responsible for policy development, coordination, and advocacy and lobbying. In order to ensure accessibility, each of the nine provinces developed and passed a legislation which culminated into establishment of Provincial Youth Commissions (PYCs) in terms of provincial legislation. The PYCs performed a mandate similar to that of NYC, but at provincial level (The Presidency, 2009b:8). In 1997, the South African Youth Council (SAYC) was also set up as an umbrella body for youth serving and youth led civil society organisations aimed at fostering political and civic participation of youth from a variety of formations (Community and Youth Workers Union, 2008; Everatt, 2000:16; The Presidency, 2009b:32).

After the second democratic national election in 1999, when the former President Thabo Mbeki was elected, youth development efforts continued to be intensified. During the Thabo Mbeki era, the South African Higher Education sector also responded to the challenge of youth development by introducing a formal education and training qualification in some of its Institutions of Higher Learning (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; Maunders, 2006:25; Mkandawire, 1999:29). Some qualifications are purely focusing on youth development, whereas others are focusing on youth care.

Table 3.2 below gives a summary of South Africa's Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work and closely related qualifications:

**Table 3.2:    South African institutions of higher learning offering Youth work qualification**

| Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work qualification | Nature of qualification offered | Intake | Location of the Programme | Programme Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Huguenot College | Bachelor Degree in Youth work | 26th Intake: offered from 1981-2007 | Department of Social Work | This institution no longer offers Youth work qualification. The programme has been moved to Stellenbosch University in 2008. |
| Durban University of Technology (DUT) | Diploma in Child and Youth Development | 10th Intake, 3-year qualification offered since 2000 | Department of Community Health Studies | The qualification started as a Diploma in Residential Child Care in 1996 and became a National Diploma in 2000. It is only offered on full time basis. This qualification is more Child and youth care oriented. |
| | Bachelor of Technology Degree in Child and Youth Development | 10th Intake, 4 years full time or 5 years part-time qualification offered since 2000 | Department of Community Health Studies | The BTech is still being offered and is also more Child and youth care oriented. |
| Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University | Bachelor Degree in Youth work | 1st Intake was in 2000 where 3 students graduated. There will be no further intake of students in 2011. | Department of Social Development Professions | The qualification is being phased out and the last class attended in 2010. |
| University of Monasch South Africa | Course in Child and Youth Development | 1st Intake: there were 52 and 117 students in the 1st and 2nd semesters of 2010 respectively | School of Arts | This course is in preparation for a formal qualification in child and youth development. The structure of the curriculum currently focuses on child care work although it was expressed that if the need arise a youth development focused curriculum could be introduced |
| Technikon South Africa (TSA) | BTech in Child and Youth Development | 9th Intake (offered from 1999-2008) | Department of Public Management | The qualification was phased out after the merger of TSA with Unisa |
| University of South Africa (UNISA) | Diploma in Youth in Development | 7th Intake | Adult and Basic Education Department (ABET) | The programme is being moved from one faculty to another creating lack of stability |

| Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work qualification | Nature of qualification offered | Intake | Location of the Programme | Programme Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| University of Stellenbosch | 3 year Bachelor, Master's and Doctorate Degrees in Theological Studies (Youth work specialisation) | 29th intake (started in 1981) | Department of Theology | The programme is being Offered |
| University of Stellenbosch | Masters Degree (MPhil) in Youth Development and Policy | 7th Intake (offered from 2001-2008) | School of Sociology and Anthropology | The programme was terminated in 2000 due to low intake and retirement of convenors |
| University of Venda for Science and Technology | 4 year Bachelor of Arts Degree in Youth Development | 11th Intake (started in 1999) | Institute for Gender and Youth Studies in the School of Human and Social Sciences | The programme is being offered, but moved from one faculty to another thus creating lack of stability |

From Table 3.2 above, in South Africa, Youth work qualification is currently being offered by UNISA, University of Venda, and University of Stellenbosch at Diploma, Degree, Masters and PhD levels. Of importance to note is that, there is at times little distinction between Youth work and Child and youth care qualification. For example, the former Technikon South Africa offered a dual degree with the option of specialising in Youth work or Child care work.

However, like Child and youth care work which has been phased out from some institutions such as Huguenot College and UNISA, Youth work qualification was also phased out in Institutions of Higher Learning such as Stellenbosch and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University with the last class of graduates being in 2008 and 2011 respectively (Calitz, 2011; Fortuin, 2010; Mudau, 2011; Raselekoane, 2011). The reasons for this are mainly due to among others lack of employment opportunities; lack of direction regarding professionalisation; and inadequate student intake.

Furthermore, the Youth work education and training in different learning institutions does not only vary in type, but also in focus (Borden, Craig & Villaruel 2004:82). In South Africa, there is no stability in terms of the location of the Youth work programme. For example, at UNISA, the programme was first located in the School

for Continuing Education and it has recently been moved to the Department of Education under Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Division (Raselekoane, 2011), whereas at the University of Venda, it was initially located in an independent Institute for Youth Studies in the School of Post Graduate Studies, and the Institute has now been merged with Gender Studies with the programme located within the School of Human and Social Sciences (Mudau, 2011).

In 2001, another key milestone was reached when Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) was established. This was in recognition of rampant youth unemployment which is in-part due to inadequate education and skills which continued to haunt young people due to their previously disadvantaged backgrounds. This institution was established with a view to promote job creation and skills development through implementation of interventions such as micro finance-lending, enterprise development, Small Micro and Medium Enterprise support and job placement initiatives. The UYF also served as the operational centre of the National Youth Service (NYS), a programme which promotes voluntary service to communities by the youth (Center for the Development and Enterprise, 2008:38; The Presidency, 2009a:79; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

In 2004 when South Africa celebrated the ten (10) years of freedom, it took stock of the First Decade of Freedom and conducted "Towards a Ten Year Review"(The Presidency, 2009a:79). It was through this review and various other studies commissioned by the Presidency and broadly by government, that it became apparent that the issue of integrating and coordinating youth development from the highest office in the Republic of South Africa – The Presidency – was crucial to achieving greater impact. The Youth Desk was then established to support and provide advisory services to political principals on youth matters (The Presidency, 2009b:33).

After its establishment, the Youth Desk in The Presidency monitored the implementation of youth development priorities on the Government's Programme of Action; ensured approval of the NYP; facilitated the signing and ratification of the AYC; coordinated activities intended at fostering international relations and cooperation; ensured that youth policies and programmes are taken through the cluster systems; completed national research studies, e.g., Towards Fifteen Year

Review; Towards a Youth Responsive Budget by CASE; 2006 Status of the Youth Report in South Africa in collaboration with the Human Sciences Research Council; and supported political principals on youth matters (Mohapi, 2008).

In 2006, the South African Cabinet took a decision to have youth directorates/ desks/ units/ focal points established across different government departments at national, provincial, and local levels. That decision further stated that these structures have to be located in such a manner that the Heads of the Departments or Municipal managers take direct responsibility (The Presidency, 2009b:33). This decision was taken to affirm South Africa's two-pronged approach to youth development.  The aim was to ensure that youth directorates/ desks/ units/ focal points facilitate mainstreaming by deliberately including youth development in all departmental planning, budgetary and procurement processes.

Although notable strides such as development and approval of the NYP (2009-2014), ratification and signing of the AYC, creation of job opportunities particularly through initiatives such as enterprise promotion, introduction of apprenticeship and learnership programmes; the impact of the services rendered by these institutions as well as achievement of desired outcomes continue to be questioned (The Presidency, 2009b:19; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:22, 28, 52). The South African youth remain underserved due to lack of coordination among the service providers. Additionally, the non-government sector which used to be in the fore front regarding pursuit of youth development agenda, also faces challenges such as brain drain, high staff turnover, drying of funds, and the changing role of civil society organisations; thus weakening and collapsing the sector (Youth Development Network, 2008:9, 25).

In response to these challenges, the 52nd National Conference of the Mandating Party resolved that rather than establishing a youth Ministry, the government should set up an agency that will ensure seamless integration, sustainability and responsiveness to the demands of South Africa's youth by coordinating youth development efforts. In 2008, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was then established through the merger of UYF and the NYC as a statutory body in terms of the NYDA Act No. 54 of 2008. It was launched in June 2009 (Mohapi, 2008;

National Youth Development Agency Act No. 54 of 2008, RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

In that same year, President Jacob Zuma as the Executing Authority for the NYDA delegated the youth development role to the Minister in the Presidency responsible for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, currently - Mr Collins Chabane. The Minister oversees youth matters in the country and this role resonates well with that of monitoring and evaluation (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009). As a result of establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and the National Planning Commission (NPC) in 2009, the Presidency was positioned to perform a different mandate in advancing youth development (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009; The Presidency, 2009:1).

In 2010, the restructuring process in The Presidency led to amongst others, dissolution of the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services (PCAS) unit and consequently disestablishment of the Youth Desk in the Presidency (Mohapi, 2010). The personnel in the Youth Desk were instead transferred to the newly established unit called Public Entities Oversight. The function of this unit is to perform an oversight role to some of the public entities reporting to The Presidency including the NYDA by providing advice on strategy and legislation, ensuring policy alignment, monitoring the operations, and advising on programme performance.

The analysis of the above structural changes is an illustration of youth development landscape being changed to respond to politics, policy developments, demands, and aspirations of young people. At present, the key role players in the youth development space continue to be government, civil society organisations, and the private sector (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011; The Presidency, 2009b:33). All these players consider youth development as an important focus due to the past political, social and economic oppression of young people created by the apartheid system (Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2; National Youth Commission, 1997:19; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011). The only shift in approach is that, in addition to mainstreaming youth development, there is now the NYDA which is dedicated to youth development and is charged with the responsibility of coordinating service delivery rendered by different role players (National Youth Commission, 1997:12;

National Youth Development Agency Act No. 54 of 2008; The Presidency, 2009b:32). Table 3.3 below illustrates South Africa's key role players currently providing a leading role in the field of youth development and stipulates the role that is played by each (Department of Social Development, 2006b:7; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:20; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

**Table 3.3: South African key structures that focus on youth development**

| Name of the structure | Focus of interventions |
|---|---|
| The Presidency | The highest office in the government administration responsible for long term planning, monitoring, evaluation, and administration of services rendered by the three spheres of government. As the accounting department for youth development in the country, The Presidency is responsible for NYDA oversight, providing advice on strategy and departmental programme performance, legislation, ensuring policy alignment, monitoring and evaluation. |
| The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) | A statutory agency of government, classified as a schedule 3 (A) and established in terms of the National Youth Development Agency Act, 54 of 2008. The NYDA is mandated to initiate, coordinate, implement, facilitate, and monitor youth development interventions and to develop appropriate policies, lobby and advocate. |
| Government departments at national level | All government departments at national level are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates, responsible for planning and coordination, policy making and management, monitoring and evaluation. |
| Government departments at provincial level | All government departments at provincial level are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates, responsible for programme design, implementation, facilitation, monitoring and evaluation. |
| Government departments at local level | The local government department as well as district and local municipalities are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates/ units/ desks, responsible for implementation and service provision. |
| Community Based Organisations (CBOs) | Non-government entities initiated by communities and located within the same communities to address young people's specific needs. |
| Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) | Organisations initiated by a religious group to address young people's specific needs. They often meet the spiritual needs of youth. |
| Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) | Established and emerging national/ provincial non-government entities which are either youth led or youth serving intended to address the identified needs of young people by complementing the work of government. |
| Private sector | Profit making organisations with interventions that respond to various needs of young people. |
| Parastatals | Government owned (in part or as a whole) institutions responsible for delivery of a wide range of services to youth, youth led and youth serving organisations e.g. research institutions, universities, state owned agencies. |

The conclusion that can be drawn from analysing the information contained in Table 3.3 above is that provision of Youth work services still remain two-pronged. Firstly, Youth work services are offered by different professionals as part of their mainstream interventions and secondly, Youth work is an institutionalised function performed by personnel who are employed by youth-focused institutions. As a result, Youth work seems to be a joint responsibility of various key players, since there is no single institution which is considered a panacea for youth development. What remains unchanged, valid and relevant, is the commitment to advance youth development as these sectors work together in responding to the needs of the youth (Department of Welfare, Population and Development, 2000:40; Sercombe, 2010:82).

Having looked at the history of Youth work and the factors that influenced its emergence, it is important to describe for whom this practice is intended. In the following section, the researcher indicates the various target youth groups which are currently prioritised.

### 3.4.3 Youth Target Groups

In acknowledging this reality that reflects that young people are not a homogenous group due to their different experiences and circumstances, there has been an attempt to broadly single out and prioritise certain youth groups for planning purposes in view of scarcity of resources, unique situations they face and different stages of development (The Presidency, 2009b:12-13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). The efforts to disaggregate data according to various groupings is geared towards ensuring that there is development of appropriate policies and programmes to respond to the needs of each group (Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:20).

The priority youth groups for the period 2009-2014 in terms of the NYP (The Presidency, 2009b:12-14) are the following:

**(i)** **Young women** – Gender equality, equity, and empowerment remains one of the cornerstones of the South African government's Programme of Action (Department of Social Development, 2010:49). This is due to the fact that, inequality along gender lines is manifested in different forms: ranging from

gender and role stereotypes, access to information, decision making powers and rights. All this makes gender inequality one of the key social determinants that limit girls and young women to be at the same level with their male counterparts, thus compromising their overall development (African Union Commission, 2009:1).

The young women in particular face problems, because they are primarily disadvantaged on the basis of gender and age (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:67). For example, owing to cultural practices such as early marriages where young women tend to give birth to a first child at an average age of 17.9, the youth face a life-time risk of dying from pregnancy and delivery related complications during the child bearing process; they are at risk of HIV infection due to having unprotected sex and, unlike their male counterparts, they may consequently drop out of school, be excluded from participating in labour markets or end up in jobs with low pay (African Union Commission, 2010:26-27; Department of Health, Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:8; Department of Social Development, 2010:51; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14).

Of importance, is the link that exists between HIV and AIDS, school drop-out, and poverty - a situation that will further trap young women in the cycle of vulnerability (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:63). This was even evidenced by the fact that, between 2008 and 2009, unemployment rates remained higher among female youth than that of their male counterparts by an increasingly larger margin despite the narrowing gap, thus resulting in higher poverty levels for the female youth (Department of Social Development, 2010:28; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:5). Furthermore, there is higher proportion of men in skilled occupations (54.9%) as compared to women (45.1%).

The examples illustrated above show that there are gender specific prejudices and challenges which young women face, hence they are considered a priority target group whose unique situation has to be addressed (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). In response to all these, the South African government has taken measures to mainstream gender in all its

development processes by amongst others: establishing a Parliamentary Portfolio Committee to perform oversight function; developing a range of legislation, policies and strategies aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of women; and establishing a fully fleshed Department of Women, Children, and People with Disabilities, responsible for coordinating interventions for women empowerment and development and a gender machinery for delivery of those interventions (The Presidency, 2009a:78; The Presidency, 2009b:13).

The gender disparities and discriminatory practices could be effectively reversed if transformation of unequal class and gender relations, empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups that include men, and design and implementation of gender sensitive interventions are realised (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:8; The Presidency, 2009b:13).

(ii)  **Young people with disabilities** – The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Disability Strategy reaffirms disability as a human rights and developmental issue (The Presidency, 2009b:13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:32). Like, young women, young people with disabilities require specific support strategies, because they are disadvantaged on the basis of their ability and age. The interventions tailored to address their needs should be geared to ensuring access to fundamental social, political and economic rights and opportunities that would enable them to participate fully in the mainstream of society (Statistics South Africa, 2001:170; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14).

In Africa, many people are reportedly becoming impaired due to conditions such as malnutrition, diseases, environmental hazards, natural disasters, traffic and industrial accidents, injuries, civil conflicts and wars (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:27). A closer inspection of these conditions shows that some are preventable whereas some are not. Therefore addressing the needs of people who have fallen victims of these conditions is crucial. On that basis, in South Africa, there has been particular focus on young learners with disabilities, in particular, girls who continue to face challenges in the form of inaccessibility of resources in

mainstream public schools, inaccessible jobs, violence, sexual violence, HIV and AIDS (Department of Social Development, 2010:10; Department of Welfare, Population and Development, 2000:40; The Presidency, 2009a:71-72). These challenges are being addressed through mainstreaming disability and gender.

Furthermore, the youth with disabilities are afforded opportunities to compete alongside their "*able bodied*" peers through introduction of interventions in the form of policies, international instruments, structures such as disability machinery as well as social integration programmes geared towards increasing their potential for productivity, creating wealth, reducing dependency and consequently benefiting the whole society (The Presidency, 2009a:71, The Presidency, 2009b:13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:32).

(iii)   **Unemployed youth** – In South Africa, "*persons are considered to be employed if they have engaged in any kind of economic activity for at least one hour in the reference period. Also included are persons who, during the reference period, were temporarily absent from work or business, but definitely had a job or business to return to*" (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:46). In this regard, employment refers to work which performed by a person in exchange for pay or income (Mufune, 1999:358). Unemployment is therefore the opposite of this description.

In South Africa, the only individuals considered to be employed, are those engaged in market production activities (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:49). There is, as a result, a conclusion that has been made that, every year in each African country, there are more and more unemployed youth graduating in the school system and generally a higher unemployment rate for young people than older ones (Mufune, 1999:358).

The above stated African situation is also reflected in South Africa, where youth unemployment is increasing, in some cases, despite the positive economic growth (Center for the Development and Enterprise, 2008:18; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:7; The Presidency, 2009a:72). The Fifteen

Year Review report indicates that even of those who are employed, about a third below the age of 25 are in elementary and unskilled occupations (The Presidency, 2009b:32). The implication is that more younger workers between the ages of 15 and 24 years are underemployed than employed individuals in other age-group categories (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:15; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:65; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). Overall, unemployment is reported to be twice as high among the youth population as it is for adult population with its effect felt by a significant number of youth who are living in poverty and extreme poverty (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:17; Morrow, 2005 as cited in The Presidency, 2009b:14).

Table 3.4 reflects the unemployment trends in South Africa for the period 2008-2010:

**Table 3.4: South Africa's unemployment trends for the period 2008-2010**

| Ages | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 15–24 years | 44.9% | 48.2% | 49.4% |
| 25–34 years | 25.0% | 28.4% | 28.4% |
| 35–44 years | 14.4% | 17.0% | 16.6% |
| 45–54 years | 9.6% | 10.8% | 11.3% |
| 55–64 years | 5.1% | 6.8% | 6.3% |
| Total | 21.8% | 24.2% | 24.0% |

Source:  Statistics South Africa, 2011b

The information contained in Table 3.4 above illustrates that there is on average an increasing problem of unemployment. Calculation of unemployment rate took into consideration, the employed, unemployed, discouraged work seekers and other persons not economically active. There was 49.4% unemployment rate for persons aged 15-24 in 2010 compared to 44.9% and 48.2% for 2008 and 2009 respectively. In 2010, unemployment rate for those aged 25-34 was 28.4% compared to 25.0% for 2008 and 28.4% for 2009. For persons between the ages of 35-44, there was a recorded 16.6% unemployment rate in 2010 compared to 14.4% and 17.0%

for 2008 and 2009 respectively. In the latter group, the unemployment rate for 2010 was slightly lower than in 2009 by 0.4%.

This trend of increasing unemployment rate amongst the youth in the country is worrying, considering that, employment is regarded as the most valued survival activity (Mufune, 1999:358; Statistics South Africa, 2011b). Overall, joblessness, lack of income, and poverty have proven to be having broader consequences for the future prosperity and development of societies and for social cohesion, because owing to idleness, unemployed youth are predisposed to risky behaviours such as crime, violence, drug abuse, vandalism and prostitution (General Assembly for Economic and Social Council, 2007:13; South African Police Service, 2010:21). Furthermore, underemployment may be associated with feelings of powerlessness which could manifest in depression or despair (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:17).

It is on the basis of the above stated reasons, that in the State of the Nation Address, President Zuma pronounced job creation as a national priority for 2011 and called for need to tackle this problem head on, by developing and implementing radical strategies to deal with the problem of unemployment, particularly among the youth, whilst at the same time providing lasting solutions which strengthen human capabilities and promote self-sufficiency (The Presidency, 2009a:85; RSA, Presidency's Budget vote; 2011; RSA, State of the Nation Address; 2011). It was proposed that the government and its relevant partners need to agree to scale up existing positive youth employment programmes and projects, and put in place permanent unemployment reduction measures. These would include strategies and interventions such as macro-economic strategies, job preparedness interventions, business opportunities and support programmes, internships, learnerships, entrepreneurial skills development and support, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills (JIPSA) and the NYS Programme (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:37; The Presidency, 2009a:77; The Presidency, 2009:14b). All these

programmes have been introduced to address the question of youth unemployment.

**(iv)    School aged-out-of-school youth** – Section 3 (1) of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, provides for compulsory attendance of school by children between the ages of seven and fifteen. The Act specifies measures to be taken if there is non-compliance and further emphasises the critical and primary role which parents have to play in that regard. This is essential since the educational attainments of youth have proven to be laying the foundation for post school attainments, thus having an impact on improving their general quality of life through influencing type of work the youth can undertake, the type of lifestyle they consequently live, creation of employment opportunities available for them, and finally increasing their share in the labour market (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:11; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:22).

Although reliable statistics for out of school youth are unavailable due to their fluid nature, The Presidency (2009b:15) as well as Statistics South Africa (2010:120) highlight a share increase of 1 percentage point to 30% and 1.1 percentage points to 15.4% for those with matric and tertiary education respectively. Of the 14 year olds, 6% were not attending school, and of the 24 years old, 86% were also not attending school. As a result of the drop out and failure rate, less than 30% of youth complete secondary school education (Department of Social Development, 2010:70).

Those who drop out of school form part of the unemployed cohort, hence young people aged 15–24 years, constitutes a higher proportion of persons without work and not seeking work, as compared to those aged between 54 and 64 years (Statistics South Africa, 2009:120). This then translates into high inactivity rate among this group (23.6% in 2008 and 26% in 2009) and these youth are unlikely to be selected for employment, since they have become discouraged work seekers (Statistics South Africa, 2009:120; Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:19). This is evidenced by 17.2% contraction in the employment of those in the formal sector and 21.8% for

those in the informal sector (RSA, Budget speech, 2010:9; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:79).

These youth leave school due to numerous situations ranging from social, political, economic, academic and specific problems which include, but are not limited to social change, prior poor school performance, poverty, teenage pregnancy, domestic responsibilities, heading households as primary care giver, illness (including HIV and AIDS), child abuse, overcrowding, family disintegration, violence, poor performance, and bad experiences at school (Department of Health Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:2; Department of Social Development, 2010:70).

As a consequence, those who drop out of school remain uneducated, unskilled and their opportunities of becoming absorbed by the labour market narrows, social status is lowered, they become the greatest casualty for unemployment and underemployment, and are eventually trapped in poverty, a condition which hinders their capacity to make successful transition to adulthood since their economic potential of contributing to their own development and that of their societies is reduced (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:36; Department of Social Development, 2010:71; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:44; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:17).

The government is taking steps to retain learners in schools whilst offering second chance opportunities to those who have already fallen prey to school dropout, albeit on a smaller scale (The Presidency, 2009b:15). This is done in view of the fact that education plays a critical role in the life of a young person and accumulation of human capital in the form of knowledge and skills is obtained primarily from school, i.e., through basic and higher education, including technical and vocational training (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10). It then becomes important that measures are taken to keep the youth in school and assist those who are out-of-school to return or be integrated into society through alternative measures such as accredited and youth-focused structured skills and work

experience programmes (Department of Health, Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:8; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; The Presidency, 2009b:21).

**(v)**     **Youth in rural areas** - "*The most difficult aspects of the legacy of apartheid to unwind, arise from its deliberately irrational patterns of population settlement arising from many sources – some of which relate directly to the different economic circumstances facing each province*" (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:22, 36). The recent establishment of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, reflects the government's thinking on internal spatial issues to reduce amongst others, the disparities brought by geographic disadvantage and showing commitment through prioritising and allocating resources for rural development (Department of Social Development, 2010:23; RSA, Budget speech, 2010:16; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011).

As a result of underdevelopment, the youth from rural areas are disadvantaged on the basis of their age and the geographic location where they have been brought up (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:7). For example, unemployment, inactivity rates and consequently poverty are higher than the national average in predominantly rural provinces such as Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal as compared to lower rates in one of the urban provinces, the Western Cape (Department of Social Development, 2010:27; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:36). This low job influx is attributed to, among others, lack of job creation and training programmes, as well as inadequate diversified industrial structures.

The impact of economic exclusion will also continuously be felt as the youth from rural areas become trapped in the cycle of poverty and end up being predisposed to social ills such as crime, the burden of diseases and drug abuse (The Presidency, 2009b:15). The result is a large pool of youth who are mostly found in rural areas where they are cared for by their older relatives as well as those who are in informal settlement due to shortage of housing and migration (Everatt, 2000:21). With regard to migration, it is

estimated that between 1999 and 2004, three million (3 000 000) youth aged 15-39 migrated to urban cities in search for better prospects and then become detached from their original communities, family structures, and ultimately became displaced and vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation (Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:22; Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:27; Department of Social Development, 2010:36; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:15; The Presidency, 2009a:109).

Although it seems clear that there is a need for rural development, there are those who still argue that resources should follow people and investments must focus on where the returns are best (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:27). This only justifies the tendency of excluding rural areas from development processes by further depleting them of the most essential human resource capacity in the form of "*youth*" who will certainly move elsewhere to make money. Such economic exclusion has far-reaching implications for a dynamic labour market in the country's goal of building a socially inclusive society, because inclusion is a necessary condition for social cohesion.

(vi)   **Youth at risk** - Accredited qualification in South Africa has been designed to impact on at risk young people (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). The needs of youth at risk rise due increasing concerns over young people who engage in risky behaviours. The consequence of having such youth is that society generally overlooks the good deeds of young people such as their participation in community service, but instead, focuses on their bad deeds such as their involvement in service delivery protests.

The positive contributions of youth are then often overshadowed by a gloomy picture, thus resulting in formulation of more controlling intervention strategies to respond to their needs. In response to all these, the NYP specified and prioritised the following groups considered to be at risk: youth

living with HIV and/or AIDS, youth heading households, youth in conflict with the law, and youth abusing dependency creating substances (The Presidency, 2009b:16).

Each of the group categorising youth at risk is briefly discussed below:

✓ Firstly, **Youth living with HIV and/or AIDS** are rightfully being given attention, because HIV and AIDS is one of the key identified priorities for health intervention in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2010:62; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011). Across the world including in Africa, the majority of new HIV infections are for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 or even younger (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001c:14; United Nations Children's Fund, 2011 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:29). In South Africa, the prevalence peak age for HIV infection in women is 25-29 years and 30-39 years for men, with higher levels for the former group (Department of Social Development, 2010:62; The Presidency, 2009b:27). This makes youth an important target group since they are still in their productive years and once infected, it may affect their livelihood prospects, thus reducing consumer base and pushing the economy into decline (Germann, 2003:81).

In South Africa, there is a commitment towards finding lasting solutions to this problem; hence the HIV and AIDS programme is being championed by the Deputy President, currently Mr Kgalema Motlanthe (RSA, Presidency's Budget vote, 2011). In this regard, the Minister of Finance, Mr Pravin Gordhan, announced an increase of R5.4 billion in spending for the HIV and AIDS programme in the 2010 budget speech (RSA, Budget speech, 2010). This cash injection is aimed at improving access to treatment for all those who are infected including the youth.

✓ Secondly, **Youth heading households** are also considered an at risk group since they prematurely assume adult roles rather than assume their age appropriate roles as youth. Their situation is caused by

problems such as fragmentation of the family, working parents as well as deterioration and disorganisation of families, HIV and AIDS, death or illness of parent/s. These situations force the youth to be primary caregivers for their ailing parents as well as their siblings (Germann, 2003:78). There is a need to support young people heading households, because they are often alone, are without proper support from adults and structured support systems, and are less likely to attend school (Germann, 2003:81). It is, therefore, critical that extended families and communities are strengthened to support these youth

✓ Thirdly, the **youth in conflict with the law** are on the increase as a result of a rapidly growing youth population, often ending up in high unemployment rates and largely dissatisfied youth (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:6). For example, in South Africa, there are numerous service delivery protests while across Africa, particularly in the Middle East, there are civil conflicts. All this led to political instability, ethnic wars, revolutions and anti-government activities (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:6). These youth are sometimes removed from society and sentenced for the crimes they have committed, thus further being excluded from development processes.

On the basis of this reality, the consequence for those who are in conflict with the law is that they are usually arrested and removed from society to alternative places of care as a rehabilitation mechanism. It is, however, essential to note that the stigma associated with the offence committed usually lasts beyond rehabilitation, and makes reconstruction and reintegration difficult to achieve. Strategies such as restorative justice, anger management programmes, social crime awareness programmes which foster good values among youth have become more significant.

✓ Finally, the **young people abusing dependency creating substances** are those who willingly or unwilling become dependent on alcohol

and/or other drugs. According to Peltzer and Phaswana (1999 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:31), whereas in the past, alcohol has always been popularly used in highly ritualised and ceremonial contexts of positive societal meanings, but it is now worrying that it is consumed widely by young people worldwide. There was also a recent report of a Grade R pupil found sniffing glue (*The Times*, 11 March 2011:1).

The study published in *The Lancet Medical Journal* as cited in *The Times* (16 March 2011:7), revealed that alcohol, if used excessively, is more dangerous; is connected to higher death rates; and is involved in a greater percentage of crime than other recreational drugs, yet society remain tolerant of "*alcohol use*". For example, the released report on the situation of crime in South Africa reveals that, "*drug-related crimes (these cover both the use, possession of and dealing in drugs)*" as well as "*driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs*", are not usually reported to the police by members of the public, but often come to their attention primarily as a result of police actions such as roadblocks, searches and intelligence (South African Police Service, 2010:21).

As a result of all these, the current Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, is heading to the President's call to "intensify the fight" against abuse of alcohol and drugs (*The Times*, 11 March 2011:1). The government is trying its best by discouraging the use of alcohol and drugs through proposing measures such as tax increases, nation-wide campaigns, stricter legislation including raising the legal age for alcohol consumption from 18 to 21 and prohibiting access to those who are below restricted age (The Presidency, 2009b:17; *The Times*, 11 March 2011:1; RSA, Budget speech, 2011:14). Furthermore, at the opening of the 2nd Biennial Summit on Substance Abuse held on the 15th of March 2011 in Durban, President Jacob Zuma outlined the plan for the liquor industry to pay a higher price for the harm inflicted to society including by restricting alcohol distribution and advertising. The President said, "*...we must not make it easy for the people to get to*

*taverns and shebeens. When we look at these businesses, it is not
good business if it affects the nation*" (*The Times,* 16 March 2011:1). In
response to that, the Government had also set up a 10-member team of
experts to develop concrete policy proposals and strategies to address
the problem of substance abuse.

In addition to the direct fight against alcohol and drug abuse, various
interventions are also directed at curbing alcohol and drug related
incidences such as sexual violence, sexual abuse and exploitation,
unsafe sex, schoolyard violence, recurring patterns of violence,
accidents, murders, social displacements and exploitation by others
(Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001c:10; *The Times*, 11 March 2011:7).
There is a need to raise awareness on the abuse of drugs and alcohol,
so that the use of dependency creating substance is not used as
admissible excuses for unacceptable behaviour including breaking the
law.

The above discussion of the prioritised youth groups highlighted that the most
productive population group in South Africa is faced with a set of challenges which
unquestionably affect their development and that of their country. The discussion
further spells out the urgency with which interventions should be developed and
implemented if the country's human capital is to be attended to. The need for skilled
personnel, who are experts in the field of youth development to provide leadership in
conceptualisation, design, and implementation of interventions aimed at addressing
the needs of young people, remains paramount. In this case, the Youth workers
seem to be appropriately qualified as experts in the field of Youth work. It is on that
basis that the next section describes the Youth workers' roles and relevant
interventions.

### 3.4.4  The Youth workers' roles

In this section, the researcher looks broadly at the key roles of Youth workers in
South Africa. These roles have been deduced from the definitions of youth
development and Youth work as stated in Chapter 1 of this study. The analyses of
those definitions reveal that the Youth workers in South Africa are involved in

performing the following roles:

▪ **Empowerment** – in this context, the Youth workers are developing and strengthening youth on an on-going basis with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to promote their total or overall development, so that they can have control of their current and future destinies, including influencing the decisions that affect them and their communities (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:7; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:10). The Youth workers help young people to define their own problem, and to explore and decide on solutions to the problem, thus becoming an important community resource (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a).

A wide range of structured empowerment programmes that assist young people include: building confidence, developing knowledge and skills, counselling, service provision, information and advice, financial support, community development, participation, self-help groups, providing discipline, forming campaigns and pressure groups (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:16-17; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:113; Edington et al., 2005 as cited in Krauss & Suandi, 2008:7). The acquisition of these skills will provide youth with necessary competence to participate fully in South Africa's development processes (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

▪ **Enabling** – the Youth workers create the conditions for youth to be engaged in activities that enable would assist them to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel grounded and to build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:3; Maunders, 2003:10; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

▪ **Ensuring** – young people are assisted to express their needs and ideas to those with power and acquire ways of making themselves valuable and contributing members of the community (Commonwealth Secretariat,

2001a:5). By so doing, Maunders (2003:10) believe Youth workers will be instilling in young people, a sense of meaning, moral and social purpose. Furthermore, opportunities are created for youth to encourage them to mature and develop on their own unique manner and unleash their God-given human potential (Kawaiski & Randall, 2005 as cited in Krauss & Suandi, 2008:3).

▪ **Coordinating:** One of the key outcomes for Youth work is coordination of youth development interventions in order to meet identified needs and ensure greater impact. This is important, especially since youth development services are rendered by variety of service providers (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:13; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; The Presidency, 2009b:32). There is, therefore, a need to pull the efforts of various key players together so that they can form partnerships intended to benefit young people by responding to their needs (Sercombe, 2010:82).

In the next section, the researcher outlines the key interventions that seek to advance youth development to determine if South Africa is on course in meeting their needs.

### 3.4.5 Youth work interventions

To conclude the discussion on the current status in a proper context, there must be a common understanding on how the history, demographics, prioritised target groups, and workers' roles helped shape the nature of interventions designed.

The premise of this discussion is therefore influenced by the view of the Commonwealth Secretariat (2001a:5), which highlighted that Youth work activities are influenced by variety of factors such as the work situation, work focus, availability of resources, and the type of youth they service. The South Africa's National Youth Policy (The Presidency, 2009b:19-32) which is aligned to the AYC (African Union Commission, 2006:8-19), reflects the following policy imperatives and interventions tailored to address the challenges faced by the youth:

- **Education** – It is widely accepted that quality education both inside and outside school creates human capital, and is a driving force for economic, social, and political development and prosperity (Department of Social Development, 2010:49). It prepares young people to live invaluable lives of contributing to their own development and that of their present and future nations, hence countries are spending more on education than ever before (Department of Social Development, 2010:70; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:11;The Presidency, 2009b:19; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10).

South Africa, has as a result, also pronounced in many of its policy discourses including the NYP, that education is the key indicator for youth development and also number one national priority with R165 billion allocated to formal education in 2011/12 financial year (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:6; RSA, Budget Speech, 2010). It is envisaged that education will unlock the future of the youth whilst making them competitive at national, regional and global level, hence the government is bolstering education and skills development through expanding further education and training colleges, increasing promoting access to student financial assistance and implementing school building programmes. (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011;United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10).

However, even though there is a marked improvement in access to education in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2010:50), there is, however, a need to pay equal attention to non-formal education in support of life-long learning and skills development and also as a measure of reaching out to youth who have been left out of the formal education system (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:11). Many educational opportunities are still leaving out young people who have dropped out of school in lower grades. This is a gap that could be closed by establishment of talent academies and vocational training centres. Furthermore, lack of linkage between education and jobs that are in demand also leave most young graduates without hope for employment.

- **Economic participation** – A Report on Labour Dynamics shows that whereas participation in labour market is being complicated by factors such as inequalities brought by race, age, gender, low levels of educational attainment as well as geographic location; there are persons who reach the working age, but are not necessarily economically active either voluntarily or involuntary (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:17-22). Of importance to this study is that, on the basis of their age and energy levels, if the youth are equipped with relevant skills and knowledge, they can contribute productively to the country's economy and development of the region (The Presidency, 2009b:21; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:12).

  Unlike in other African countries such as Angola, Zambia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, and the Central African Republic with the labour participation rate being higher than 70%, South Africa has youth labour force participation rate at 50% (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; 2011:13). In response to this, South Africa's President, Mr Jacob Zuma, announced in the 2011 State of the Nation Address, that there should be priority measures of creating jobs through agriculture, mining beneficiation, manufacturing, green economy and tourism aimed at denting unemployment, particularly amongst the youth. These could also increase the ability of the economy to cope with the large numbers of the economically active people who constitute a majority of the unemployed through preparing them for the labour market and increasing their employability (Department of Social Development, 2010:71; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011; *Sunday Times*, 23 January 2011; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:13).

- **Health and well-being** – Health also enjoys the largest share of the overall budget of the country, because it is linked to the "*ability to receive education, engage in income generating activities and participating in other structures of society*" (RSA, Budget speech, 2010; Richter & Panday, 2005 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:25). The health of young people is also linked to the situation they grow into, including levels of deprivation and poverty, hence the need to adopt a multi-sectoral approach in improving the conditions of youth to ensure that they enjoy the best

attainable state of physical, mental, and spiritual health (African Union Commission, 2006:12; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:51; The Presidency, 2009b:24). The youth should also be provided with relevant and youth appropriate health information (Simmons, 2006:105).

The deterioration of the young people's health influences their situation in the global economy and is caused by amongst others vulnerability to a range of diseases and injuries such as HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis, Sexual Transmitted Diseases, injuries, and nutritional deficiencies, of which the budget makes provision for (Department of Social Development, 2010:72; RSA, Budget speech, 2010; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:52). In addition, there are numerous efforts being made to improve the health conditions of young people through health promotion, reduction of risky behaviours and development of an inter-cluster health plan for the youth (The Presidency, 2009b:24, 25). The overall health and well-being of young people continue to be critical to the country's growth and cannot be ignored.

- **Social cohesion and civic participation** – Social cohesion has assumed greater focus since 2004, hence it is also at the centre of the NYP and the government's priorities for action. It entails inculcating a sense of togetherness, national identity, solidarity, responsible citizenship, and patriotism as a contribution to building a true developmental state (RSA, Budget speech, 2010; The Presidency, 2009a:29; The Presidency, 2009b:26). According to the NYP, these tenets allow young people to build their capital and networks, whilst strengthening the relations that bind people together. As already stated in Chapter 3, the outcome of being involved in community activities and keeping society together is the ability to form intimate relationships, foster a sense of belonging, increase self-esteem, look back and accept life with integrity (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; Vander Zanden, 1993:46).

As one of the government's key priorities, what is crucial when fostering social cohesion, is ensuring effective participation of young people in development and governance processes - a move towards diverting their attention from self destructive and risky behaviours to constructive activities such as monitoring government effectiveness and holding it accountable (United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:79-83; The Presidency, 2009b:26). Like other citizens, the South African youth are also given an opportunity to be involved directly in decision making processes through participating in various existing political, faith-based, issue-based and umbrella youth formations such as the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League, Democratic Alliance (DA) Youth League, Students' Christian Organisations, South African Youth for International Diplomacy (SAYID), Youth in Business, and South African Youth Council (SAYC).

The above mentioned structures are organised on the basis of their shared interests. Although there is a need to increase youths' participation in these structures and to recognise them as credible voice for their constituencies, the challenge is that of participation being voluntary and of overlapping and duplicated mandates.

- **National Youth Service (NYS)** – Adopted as part of interventions for youth development, the NYS is aimed at engaging youth in community service activities whilst providing them an opportunity to gain structured skills necessary to access sustainable livelihoods (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:47; Mulaudzi, 2000:132; The Presidency, 2009b:29). This programme, although primarily coordinated by the NYDA, is offered by all key stakeholders. and serves as an opportunity for youth to express their civic responsibility. According to Mulaudzi (2000:132), the NYS is not yet legislated in South Africa despite the White Paper that was submitted to Cabinet in 1999 and this presents implementation challenge since the bulk of service providers are outsourced and financial resources are limited.

The long term vision of the NYS is to have it expanded as a compulsory rather than voluntary service (The Presidency, 2009b:30). In this regard, the role of youth organisations ought to be broadened, to accommodate and accord the youth the opportunity of doing voluntary and/or community service. It is through programmes such as these that young people's energies, solidarity, creativity and optimism are constructively used to facilitate smooth transition from school to work and preferential access to employment opportunities

(Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:37; Mulaudzi, 2000:133; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:43).

At the continental level, there are successes reaped from the NYS and the AUC, where the latter launched the Youth Volunteer Corps in 2010 in order to harness the skills of young people for development purposes (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:45). On that note, it would be important for South Africa to learn best practice NYS models from the neighbouring African countries such as Namibia, where the NYS is legislated and championed vigorously. The South African NYS model is failing to inculcate patriotism amongst the youth and the programme is also not reaching many young people in a manner that their contribution to the national agenda is felt.

- **Youth work** – This practice is listed as one of the key youth development interventions in the NYP (The Presidency, 2009b:31) and is also the core area of investigation for this study. It has already been evidently illustrated throughout this report, that Youth work is committed to total development and support of young people as primary clients (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:17; Sercombe, 2010: 82; The Presidency, 2009b:31).

  However, despite the benefits reaped through this practice, there are still challenges some of which propelled the researcher to do this study. Taking the background that led to evolution of Youth work into cognisance, the researcher now examines the tasks which still need to be carried out in order to determine its future (Kelly, 1990:168, 175; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187). It is important to note that even though Youth work is mentioned to be a possible profession in the NYP, it would be important that there is determination of what ought to happen in the social service sector.

In the next chapter, the researcher takes a closer look at the professionalisation process and how it unfolded in South Africa. The analysis is intended to enable the researcher to unearth the challenges faced in this regard, since professionalisation is one of the options being explored in this study as the future of Youth work. The aim would be to answer some of the key research questions raised in this study, namely: Should Youth work remains an occupation? Should it be recognised as an area of

specialisation? Should it be recognised as an autonomous profession? What are the benefits and non-benefits of specialising and/or professionalising?

By answering all these questions, the researcher may hopefully be in the position to assist policy makers and various key stakeholders in determining policy direction that could shape the future of Youth work practice in the country. This discussion comes at a time when there is lack of balance between high demand for social service professionals to respond to increasing social development challenges and shortage of social services professionals to meet those demands. It is due to all this that there is a need to understand the current and future status of Youth work practice.

## 3.5   CONCLUDING REMARKS

The discussion on the status of Youth work at international, regional and national levels has provided a substantial amount of useful information which provided background to the emergence of Youth work whilst giving indication of the direction to be followed in the future. It is clear that all these developments have been influenced by a range of political, social and economic factors that ought to be taken into consideration when interventions are being designed. Furthermore, given the similarities of experiences between what is happening at international, regional and national levels, as well as the impact of globalisation across the world, it is required that different countries define relevant national situations that contextually reflect what is happening on the ground, whilst aligned to trends at regional and international levels.

Again, even though there is overall commitment to the advancement of youth development, evidenced by development of policies and programmes intended to promote the well-being of young people, there is no coordinated effort to bring all this together in some form of a career ladder (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:84). This challenge and others are reflective of the need to define the future of Youth work. To this end, this study seeks to provide evidence that will guide the current debate on the future status of Youth work at national level and hopefully guide policy decision taking at regional and global levels. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses in detail the future of Youth work practice.