



Rivers State Government of Nigeria

Rivers State Youth Policy

2020-2024

*Promoting Youth Development and Participation
in the context of Sustainable Development*

Rivers State Ministry of Youth Development

2020 (1st Edition)

FORWARD

Rivers Youth have a lot to contribute in building a progressive and prosperous State for all. Admittedly, it would be a pipe dream to achieve these lofty state objectives without empowering and developing the capacities of these youths. It is therefore, widely accepted that a pragmatic and result-oriented Youth Policy will help us to build and groom the type of youth we want in Rivers state.

In appreciation of the above ideals, the State Ministry of Youth deemed it mandatory to develop a youth development policy document. This activity as a matter of fact, is of utmost importance to this administration. The Rivers State Youth Policy will serve as a template and blueprint to harness and build the capacity of our youths.

Although, the policy is modeled after the National Youth Policy (2019), our peculiar needs, environment and challenges informed and necessitated the desire to chart a new policy direction and re-write the narrative in the interest of Rivers State and its youths. The policy, therefore, adapted the five strategic national thrust and eleven thematic areas of priority. The key objectives differ to some degree from the national objectives and strategies owing to the peculiar needs of the State.

The Rivers State Youth Policy considered many factors before coming up with the clear classification and categorization of youths. It is very common these days for old folk to delight in being tagged as youth. For the purpose of this policy youth are regarded as those aged between 15 and 35 years of age. They present the most vibrant, energy and restive segment of the state population. Youth organizations in Rivers State are classified into: youth led, youth focused, faith-based, gender-sensitive and ethnic/regional organizations.

It is our belief that this blueprint will help us to develop and build the caliber of youths that we will be proud of. Their grooming and development must, however, be as provided and recommended by the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Nigeria National Youth Development Policy. As a ministry, we assure our teeming youths and stakeholders that this policy will serve as a guide to all our future engagements.

Ohia Prince Obi Mni

Hon. Commissioner

Ministry for Youth Development, Rivers State.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to begin by admitting that the task of producing the very first edition of Rivers State Youth Policy blueprint has finally been accomplished. The production of the policy framework is an intellectually stimulating and rigorous exercise. It is hoped that this policy will find its place when the annals of youth development efforts is placed side by side with the politics of youth developmental in Rivers State.

Much of the successes achieved can be attributed to the untiring effort of the honourable commissioner for Youth in particular and the Management staff of the Ministry for their guidance and expert advice to the consultants and scholars on public policies that were engaged in the domestication and development of the youth policy. Notable amongst them were Prof. Obidahiah Agarra and Dr. Godwin Onuoha of the Department of Political Science, Eastern Palm University, Orlu, Imo State and Mr. Richard Nwigwe of the Department of Public Administration, Pan African Polytechnic, Port Harcourt.

This acknowledgement will be incomplete without mention of the special roles of the office of the Governor (Rivers State), Leadership of National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), Rivers State, and Rivers State House of Assembly Committee on Youth Development (RVHA). Also, worthy of acknowledgement is the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Information and Communication, and other stakeholders. On behalf of the directors and Heads of departments of the ministry namely; Mrs. R. Keije (Director, Network, Social Mobilization), Deputy Director Mr. Loveday Agbam (Head, Youth Enterprise and Business Promotion), Deputy Director Mr. Atubokiki Joshua (Head, Planning, Research and Statistics), Assistant Director Mrs. Nwaubeta Omaniem (Head, Finance and Accounts) and Principal Administrative Officer Mr. Lawrence Omunakwe (Head, Administration), It is my firm conviction that this document will be of immense benefit to the government, the state institutions and agencies, multi-nationals, Civil Societies as well as Rivers youth and will serve as a reference to the numerous issues surrounding youth development efforts in Rivers State.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AYFHS	Adolescent- and Youth-Friendly Health Services
BOA	Bank of Agriculture
BOI	Bank of Industry
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CLTC	Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre
CoEs	Colleges of Education
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ERYO	Ethnic and Regional Youth Organization
ERGP	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan
FBYOs	Faith-based Youth Organizations
FLHE	Family Life and Health Education
GSYO	Gender Sensitive Youth Organization
GAR	Gross Attendance Ratio
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
JAMB	Joint Admission and Matriculation Board
JCCE	Joint Consultative Committee on Education
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MSMEs	Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises
NACA	National Agency for the Control of AIDS
NAR	Net Attendance Ratio
NARHS	National HIV/AIDS & Reproductive Health Study
NASS	National Assembly
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NCCE	National Commission of Colleges of Education
NCY	National Council on Youth
NDHS	Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey
NECA	Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, Training
NEPC	Nigeria Export Promotion Council
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations

NIS	Nigeria Immigration Service
NITDA	National Information Technology Development Agency
NITDF	National Information Technology Development Fund
NOA	National Orientation Agency
NSCDC	Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp
NTI	National Teachers Institute
NUC	Nigeria University Commission
NYCN	National Youth Council of Nigeria
NYDC	National Youth Development Council
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OST	Out-of-School Time
PCVE	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
PHCs	Primary Health Care
RMNCAH	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMEDAN	Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
RSYP	Rivers State Youth Policy
RSYDC	Rivers State Youth Development Council
RSYP	Rivers State Youth Parliament
STEM	Sciences, Technical, Engineering, and Mathematics
UN-DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
YCE	Youth Civic Engagement
YLO	Youth Led Organization
YFO	Youth Focused Organization

Policy Highlights

In Rivers state, there is the growing desire and need for the development of the potentials of the youth. This has increasingly become necessary in view of the upsurge in youth population over the years. The youth occupy very important position in the transformation and development process in the State. It is therefore, imperative to harness the energy, drive and potentials of this segment of the state's population through meaningful engagements, empowerment and participation. It is hoped that this policy will serve as a declarative guide and commitment on the part of Government to explore the productive potentials of our teeming youth; and to make our young men and women understand the direction of government towards their development.

Policy Vision:

It is our desire to design and promote a youth development framework to secure the future of our youth through proactive engagements and encouragement of youth's participation in the development process of the State.

Mission Statement

To engage all stakeholders in the youth development process and collective task to harness the abundant potentials of Rivers youth through a progressive and pragmatic policy.

Policy Goal

To create favorable conditions for the promotion of the dignity of Rivers youth, development of their potentials and ensure their involvement in the overall transformation agenda of the government of Rivers State.

Target Population

Unlike the National Policy that sets the age bracket of youth between 15 and 29years, The Rivers States youth policy is targeted at those aged between 15 and 35years. This group represents the most restive, energetic and vibrant members of the state with limitless talents and energy to contribute to the development of the state, while setting this group as the policy benchmark, there are chances of review and redefinition of the target in the nearest future.

Strategic Thrusts

The strategic thrusts or pillars of the State youth policy are modeled after the National Youth Policy. These pillars are the foundational thrusts that cut across sectors of the developmental milestones, that will eventually transform and make our Rivers youth transit to self-sustenance and productive life, in line with the vision and mission statement of the policy. These Pillars include among others:

1. PRODUCTIVE WORK FORCE AND SUSUTAINABLE ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH:

It is our desire to ensure adequate education and transfer of industry skills to the youths. This will enable them to be productive and contribute to the development of the State.

2. Health and Health-Promoting Life Style:

According to the WHO, health is a complete state of physical, social, mental and spiritual well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The health and overall wellbeing of our youth cannot be over-emphasized so; the policy is directed towards ensuring not only the intellectual and entrepreneurial development of the youth but also their health and physical wellbeing to enable them contribute to the State.

3. Participation, Inclusiveness and Equitable Opportunities for Youths:

The policy is driven by the need to ensure the involvement of Rivers Youths in the social, economic and political advancement of the State.

4. Promotive and Protective Environment for Youth Development:

It is only proper that the creation of an enabling environment for youth development will ensure and fast track the advancement of Rivers youth as well as guarantees the protection of their right and humanity.

5. Partnership Building and Effective Collaboration:

The development of the potentials of our youth will be achieved faster through synergy and involvement of not only the government, community-based organization but the International Oil Companies, multi-nationals, International development partners, Civil Societies, other cooperate bodies, and the creation of institutional framework and advance the vision of the State towards the empowerment of the youth.

POLICY BENCHMARKS/OBJECTIVES:

The policy benchmarks adopted here is as applicable to Rivers State. They are driven by the five strategic Pillars of the National Youth Policy (2019)

S/N	STRATEGIC THRUST/PILLAR	POLICY OBJECTIVES
1	Productive workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Bursary to Rivers Youth in Tertiary Institutions - Free Education at Primary and Secondary School Levels. - Employment and Training of Teachers ▪ EMPLOYMENT CREATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skill Acquisition Training of Youth in 23 LGAS - Entrepreneurship Training/ Capacity Building Programs - Granting of interest –free loan to young entrepreneurs ▪ YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilization/Engagement of Youths in Rivers “ Back To Land Programme” - Engagement of Youth in SONGHAI Farms and Pilot Projects - Granting Soft Loans to Young Farms/Farmers - Encouraging AGRO-BUSINESS(Fish Farming, Snail Farming ETC) through Training Programs ▪ YOUTH AND ICT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ICT Training, Capacity Building of 50 Youth annually from each Local Government over the next 4 years
2	Health and Health-Promoting Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the National standards and minimum service packages for adolescents and youth friendly Health services in Rivers State. - Implement Primary Health Care under One Roof policy of the NPHCDA - Implement the tertiary institutions social health insurance scheme for Rivers Youths. - Implementing the Primary , Secondary and Tertiary Health care delivery for the Youths into a comprehensive state –wide network - Implement the free HIV/AIDS tests and treatment of youth in Rivers State - Implement free cervical cancer and sickle cell screening for students in the State
3	Participation, inclusiveness and equitable opportunities for all youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an enabling environment for youth development in the 23 Local Government Areas - Increase and build the capacity of the youth for grass root mobilization and participation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilize and encourage political involvement of the youth in the transformation process in the State - Engage the youth in productive and rewarding activities at the grass-root - Institute a Reward Scheme for exceptional and productive youth in each of the 23 LGAs
4	Promotive and Protective Environment for Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enact and enforce laws that guarantee equal opportunities for all Rivers Youths (Rivers State Youth Development Law) -domesticate and enforce the conventions of the rights of the child and women -make and enforce laws to prohibit all forms of abuse, discrimination and violence on the youth based on gender -promote and protect the fundamental human rights of youth in Rivers State
5	Partnership Building and Effective Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the inter-ministerial development of the productive capacities of youth. - Establish and strengthen State Youth Development Technical Working Committee (SYD-TWC). - Float a Youth Development and empowerment fund to attend to the development needs of the youths in Rivers State - Encourage youth to engage in certificate programs in youth development work - Establish a framework to promote and strengthen the partnership among youth, non-state agencies and government in the emancipation process of the youths - To initiate and establish a system of communication, inter-play between youths and the government of Rivers State - Establish and inaugurate ‘the State Youth Council’ to show political will and commitment on the part of government in the pursuit of youth development.

Adopted from National Youth Policy 2019

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

To ensure the implementation of the outlined policy benchmarks and objectives, all hands must be on deck. The State Government, civil society groups, non-state actors, and international

institutions and the youth themselves must be integrated in the implementation process. In line with the core mandate of the Rivers State Ministry of Youth Development, this policy will be supervised, monitored and its implementation evaluated periodically.

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STRATEGIC THRUST 1: Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth			
	Priority Areas	IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE	Implementation MDAs
1.	Education, Capacity Building & Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote regular payment of the annual bursary to Rivers Youth in Tertiary Institutions ▪ Set aside special fund for regular training and capacity building of youth in the 23 LGAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Education ▪ Ministry of Finance ▪ Ministry of Youth ▪ Ministry of Agriculture ▪ Ministry of Information, I.C.T Division
2.	Employment Creation & Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure transparency in the selection of beneficiaries of the micro-credit scheme ▪ Promote and sustain the overseas training of selected youths from the LGAS in foreign universities ▪ Promote and sustain the involvement of the youths in “Back to Land” agricultural program ▪ Design and execute a regular system of ICT training of youth in the 23 local government areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Employment Generation & Empowerment ▪ Micro –Finance Bank (Rivers) ▪ RSSDA.
3.	Youth in Agriculture		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Agriculture
4.	Youth and ICT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Information & Communication ▪ Office of the SSA to Governor on ICT
STRATEGIC THRUST 2: Health and Health promoting Lifestyle			
	Thematic Focus	Implementing Guide	Implementing MDAs
1.	Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraging Rivers Youth to embrace and cultivate healthy lifestyle through enlightenment and advocacy ▪ Promote the development of sports and healthy exercises among youths ▪ Improve health care delivery to youths in situations of higher learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Health ▪ Ministry of Information & Communication ▪ Ministry of youth and Ministry of Sports ▪ Ministry of Education ▪ Rivers State Primary Health Care Management Board ▪ Rivers State Hospital Management Board ▪ Rivers State University Teaching Hospital ▪ National orientation agency (Rivers)
STRATEGIC THRUST 3: Participation , inclusiveness and equitable opportunities for youths			
	Thematic Area	Implementing Guide	Implementing MDAs

1.	Civic Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Awareness programme through workshops and seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of information & Communication
2.	Political Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilize and encourage Rivers Youth to be involved in the statewide political process Engage the youth in political education and capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National orientation Agencies(Rivers Chapter) Ministry of Youth Development Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission The NYSC - The INEC
STRATEGIC THRUST 4: Ensure Promotive and protective environment for youth development			
	Thematic Area	Implementing Guide	Implementing MDAs
1.	Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom of Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate and make gender friendly laws, policies that will protect the rights of Rivers youths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Justice Rivers State House of Assembly
2.	Peace and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and promote peace building and other initiatives that will ensure harmonious existence among youths in Rivers State, including Alternative Dispute Resolution. Establish a platform for meaningful engagement of youths in peace process, security and order in Rivers State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Information & Communication Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of Women Affairs The Media, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Youth Development Nigeria Police DSS RSVHA Local Government Councils Office of the S. Adviser to H.E on Security
STRATEGIC THRUST 5: Effective Partnership Building and Collaboration in youth development			
	Thematic Focus	Implementing Guide	Implementing MDAs
1.	Sustainable platform for multi-sectoal collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring multi- sectoral involvement and engagement in youth education, advocacy, training and capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of education NYCN Ministry of health

2.	Capacity for promoting youth development Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating platforms for productive youth engagement in governance process in Rivers state. ▪ Engage the youth in grassroots mobilization, peace building and empowerment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of information and communication ▪ NOA (National orientation Agency) ▪ Ministry of Chieftaincy & Community Affairs ▪ Ministry of Employment Generation & Empowerment ▪ Ministry of Agriculture ▪ Ministry of Justice ▪ Citizenship & Leadership Institutions
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Adopted from National Youth Policy 2019)

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

Background, Need for RSYP and Policy Context

1.1 Background to the Rivers State youth policy

Youth constitute a vital segment of the society. They represent the future of any country or state. A state with large youth population has the potentials for greatness if the energy and vibrancy of the youth are put to proper use. Because of the strategic position of the youth in Rivers State, it has become increasingly necessary to create a condition for them to develop their capacity to make meaningful contributions to the development of the State and the country as well. In keeping with this, the Rivers State Government through the Ministry of Youth Development intends to design a youth policy which shall be modeled after the National Youth Policy without undermining the peculiar policy intends to initiate and implement programs and policies geared towards youth empowerment, education, advancement and participation in order to ensure equity and cohesion.

The Rivers State youth policy, being a declaration and commitment to priorities is set out to define and establish clear goals that will give direction to our teeming youth. The policy has the capacity to guide in the development of young people so that they can take their rightful position in the state building and development processes. The policy clearly spelled out the focus and priorities of the state towards addressing the myriads of developmental challenges in the youth sector. In doing this, the youth have to be integrated into the process of funding solution to problems that affect them. The governments, non-state actors, I.O.Cs, multi-nationals, Civil Society Organizations and international development partners have great part to play in this noble youth development initiative. It is our conviction that a pragmatic and functional youth policy will address the problems facing the youth of Rivers state.

1.2 Need for Rivers State Youth Policy

There is the National Youth Policy which originated back to 1981 and has since been reviewed twice. The last edition was in 2019. The National Youth Policy serves as a template and policy direction for youth development and empowerment in Nigeria. But the states as component parts of the Nigerian federation have peculiar youth needs and issues to contend with. Again, some environmental, cultural and socio-economic variables and peculiarities justify the decision to chart a unique course for youth policy in Rivers State

On this basis, it has increasingly become necessary to have the Rivers State youth policy which will deal with the peculiar needs and challenges of the youth. The National Youth Policy will, however, provide the guide and standard framework for the State youth policy.

1.3 Youth in the Context of Rivers State Youth Policy

The definition and categorization of youth has become a very controversial topic over the years. The United Nation defines youth as those within the age 15 to 24. Also, the African Youth charter of 2006 defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 35. In Nigeria, the National Youth Policy of 2009 classified those persons between the ages of 18 and 35 as youth. However, based on current demographic realities and the Labor Act that allows those between the ages of 12 and 16 years to be eligible for apprenticeship contracts, the 2019, NYP has pegged the youth category from 15 to 29years. This definition of youth within the Nigerian context does not place any restriction on redefinition of the categories of youth.

As for Rivers State, in view of our peculiarities such as age of school enrolment and completion, ethnic diversities, culture and language barriers the youth Policy has included those between the ages of 15 to 35years as youth. This is however, subject to review and redefinition as circumstance permit.

1.4 Demography of Youth in Rivers State

The youth in Rivers State constitute a large part of the overall population of Rivers State. According to the data obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and National Population Commission (NPopC), in 2006 Rivers State was 5,198,716. Taking a growth rate of 3.5%, Rivers State has a 2016 projected population of 7,303,924 and projected 2020 population of 8,280,753. It is the 6th most populated state in Nigeria and has 41% of the entire national population. A clear view of the youth population can be obtained from the age distribution table below:

Table 1.1: Demography of age distribution in Rivers State

Age Distribution	Population
0-9 years	1,262,446
10-19 years	1,214, 221
20-29 years	1,036,110
30-39 years	681,847
40-49 years	472,846
50-59 years	265,117
60-69 years	149,058
70-79 years	67,059
80+ years	50,012

Source: NBS (2006)

From the table above, the youth constitute more than 50% of the State's population. Those that belonged to the age group (0-19 years) are 1,262,446 while 1, 036,110 youth belonged to the age group of 20 -39

There are twenty-three LGAS in Rivers with Port Harcourt and Obio-Akpo having the largest chunk of the youth population. Although there are no existing data (statistics) on the percentage allocation of youth population to the local government areas, the population of each Local

Government can give us some hint on the youth strength of each Local Government. Based on the National Population census 2016 projection, Rivers state has a population of 7,303,924. The population of the local government is as represented in the table below.

Table 1.2: Population Distribution by LGA

S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	POPULATION
1	Port Harcourt	756,600
2	OBIO-AKPOR	649,600
3	OKRIKA	312,300
4	OGU/BOLO	105,800
5	ELEMA	267,200
6	TAI	169,000
7	GOKANA	328,500
8	KHANA	411,500
9	OYIGBO	176,100
10	OPOBO/NKORO	214,700
11	ANDONI	306,200
12	BONNY	302,000
13	DEGEMA	350,500
14	ASARI-TORU	308,800
15	AKUKU-TORU	226,300
16	ABUA-ODUAL	396,800
17	AHOADA WEST	350,200
18	AHOADA EAST	233,700
19	OGBA/EGBEMA/NDONI	398,000
20	EMOHUA	282,500
21	IKWERRE	265,400
22	ETCHE	351,200
23	OMUMA	141,000
	TOTAL=	7,303,900

Sources: National Bureau of Statistic (Population projection 2016-03-21)

There is no doubt that the population of youth in Rivers State has continued to increase; it is, therefore, a matter of necessity to initiate, plan and implement an action-oriented youth policy to

mobilize and engage the energies, potentials of these segment of the state’s population to drive the process of human and socio-economic developments in the State. More importantly, there is the growing desire to ensure that these youths are empowered and given the required training so that they do not face a future of uncertainty, gloom and hopelessness.

The government is therefore, upbeat about the empowerment and development of the youth. This can be achieved through education, entrepreneurial training, capacity building and other forms of training/skill acquisition.

1. 5 Policy Development Process

It is important to admit here that wide consultation and brainstorming is key to the production of a working paper and policy for youth development in the State. The state youth policy is, therefore, a product of extensive review of the NYP (2019), robust and extensive interaction involving directors in the Ministry of Youth, stakeholders in the youth development and social works/ task. They include line Ministries, Departments and Agencies; NYCN (Rivers State) & affiliate organizations, voluntary/social clubs, Community Based Youth Organizations, Civil societies, faith-based Youth organizations and Youth development partners & the academia etc

Again, seasoned scholars and development consultants were involved in the process of making this all-encompassing and progressive youth policy for Rivers State

Additionally, there were series of meetings and consultations at inter-Ministerial levels for inputs and critics, all aimed at producing a pragmatic youth policy, which took into consideration the peculiar needs and challenges of the State and its youth.

Policy Context and Guiding Principle

The Rivers State youth policy is guided by the existing National Youth Policy, (2019) and the format of presentation was also adopted for ease of application. Also, the gender-based issues, health policies and national policy on education provided a roadmap for the Rivers youth policy. These policies offered a general outlook and direction for states within the Nigerian federation. This means that youth policies for states cannot be a complete departure from the national policy. Apart from the sectoral policy initiatives outlined above, a number of programmes and policies at the national level have shaped the form and context of the State Youth policy. These initiatives include the vision 20:2020, the national job creation template (2009-2011) the National Science Technology and Innovation Policy(ST&I), the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan(ERGP) a Medium Term Plan of Development for 2017- 2020 among others.

At the regional and sub-regional level, a number of initiatives, legislation and policies have brought their weight to bear on the Rivers State Youth Policy. In other words, the states' youth policy took into consideration the provision and outcomes of these regional and sub-regional initiatives in the course of making the policy. The initiatives and policies include but not limited to the ECOWAS Commission Youth Policy, The African Youth Charter, and the Common Wealth Youth Charter ETC

Also, at the global level, the states' youth policy took into account some of the policies, initiatives and programmes of the global institution. They include the United Nation Charter which emphasizes the right of the Youth, the UN World Programme of action for youth, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the 2012 Resolution of the UN on population and development of adolescents. Also, the states' youth policy took a special look and emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in view of the fact that most of the SGD goals affect youth and their development.

2.1 Guiding Principles and Values

The Rivers State youth policy is driven by certain principles and values which define the uniqueness of the youths' challenges and needs. They include:

1. Respect for the diversity, needs and rights of youth
2. Protection of the fundamental freedom, rights and privileges of youth
3. Mobilizing and engaging youth in a state wide consultation and decision-making on issues affecting them
4. Promoting the environment for equal opportunities for youth and involving them in the development and governance processes in the State
5. Implementing youth and gender friendly policies and programs

CHAPTER THREE

VISION, GOAL AND TARGET POPULATION

In Rivers State, there is a growing desire and need to develop the potentials of youth. This has increasingly become necessary in view of the upsurge in youth population over the years. The youth occupy very important position in the transformation and development process in Rivers State

It is therefore, imperative to harness the energy, drive and potential through meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation.

3.1 Policy Vision

It is our desire to design and promote a youth development framework to secure the future of the youth through pro-active engagements and encouragement of youth participation in the development process of the state.

3.2 Policy Mission

To engage all stakeholders in the youth development process and collective task of harnessing the abundant potentials of Rivers youth through a progressive and pragmatic policy

3.3 Policy Goal

To create favorable conditions for the promotion of the dignity of Rivers youth, development of their potentials and ensuring their involvement in the overall transformation agenda of the Government of Rivers State

3.4 Target Population

The State youth policy is targeted at those aged between the ages of 15 and 35 years. This group represents the most restive, energetic and vibrant members of the State with limitless talents and energy to contribute to the development of the State.

As enunciated in the NYP, there are three categories of youth the policy targets. They include:

1. Low Risk Youth: These are normal young men and women that will ordinarily grow or transit to adulthood unhindered with little but appropriate support from the society. They have no physical or mental disability and are not vulnerably exposed to health and social risk.
2. Especially vulnerable Youth: These groups of youth have developmental, social, economic, cultural, political, legal, educational and family challenges that hindered them from attaining their potentials in life. They include:
 - a) Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) of any form
 - b) Youth who could not complete formal education in schools (Drop-outs)
 - c) Youth who because of their residual health challenges and other special needs could not cope with life challenges
 - d) Youths' that nature does not particularly favor due to social and economic background hence are vulnerable to health risk and other forms of social vices:
 - i. Youth living on the streets;

- ii. Youth living in extreme poverty;
- iii. Youth living in slum areas (with rates of crime and access to drugs);
- iv. Youth living in disadvantaged communities including rural areas;
- V. Youth living in families where there is physical and/ or sexual abuse;
- Vi. Internally Displaced Youth;
- Vii. Female Youth in environments of high gender inequity;
- Viii. Youth working in hazardous occupation

c) Most at risk youth: These are extremists that engaged in social vices that exposes them and the larger society to danger. They per took in: Armed conflicts, crime, substance abuse, commercial sex and religious fanaticism.

To actualize the needs of the various categories as stated above, there is need to put in place specific strategies in the policy framework that will eventually address their peculiarities.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE STRATEGIC THRUSTS OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN RIVERS STATE, THEIR THEMATIC FOCUSES, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

4.1 Strategic Thrusts

The five key strategic thrusts which are essential for the realization of the ambitious goals of the National youth development policy are also adopted in the development and domestication of the SYP in River State. These are:

1. *Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youths in River State:*

This strategic thrust of the policy focuses on the development of youths in Rivers state into an action and productive workforce that would be capable of transforming the economy of the state and ensuring economic self-sufficiency / self-reliance of every youth in the state. This is expected to be realized through quality education that is capable of transforming and imparting requisite, knowledge, skills, right attitude and needed dispositions on the youths which would in turn make them productive as well as dependable and efficient workforce in their places of work.

2. *Health and Health-promoting Lifestyle:*

In line with the saying that “health is wealth”, this strategic thrust of the policy aims at promoting a healthy lifestyle among youths in River State through the inculcation of ethically and morally accepted behaviors as well as making available quality health services for the youths in River State. It equally aims at educating youth on how to access such services so as to enhance their physical, mental and social wellbeing in line with the definition of health by World Health Organization (WHO). This in turn promotes productive and active youths in the state.

3. *Participation, Inclusiveness and Equitable Opportunities for all Youths in the State:*

This third pillar of the policy is aimed at promoting participatory, inclusive and a level playing ground for the economic, social and political involvement of youth. It aims at removing barriers that hinders equitable distribution of socio-economic and political resources of the state among youths of the state. This is intended to be realized through the desired civic and political education of youth as well as other requisite empowerment programs for youths.

4. *Promotive and Protective Environment for Youth Development:*

This strategic policy thrust focuses on promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of youths in Rivers State as provided in chapter 4 of 1999 constitution of Nigeria (as amended) as well as the civic / political, economic and social rights as articulated in the universal declaration of human rights. It equally aims at ensuring conducive environment where youth can fully realize their potentials without discrimination, violence, abuse, intimidations, gender or any physical disability.

5. *Partnership-Building and Effective Collaboration among Stakeholders and other Development Agencies on Youth Development Policy:*

This strategic policy thrust is aimed at enhancing sincere and honest co-operation and collaboration among all stakeholders and interested partners in youth development in River State. It equally aimed at engendering sustainable inter-sectoral and multi-dimensional youth empowerment structure and programs capable of attracting the most efficient and competent experts that can enhance the quality of youth empowerment development programs in the state.

4.2 Strategic Thrusts 1: Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth

The development of youths with appropriate and quality education coupled with acquisition of relevant skills will enable our youth to be gainfully employed and be productive as entrepreneurs and be economically empowered to live a meaningful live and make sustainable contributions to the State.

4.2.1 Thematic Focus 1: Education, Capacity-Building and Skill Development

A. *Situational Analysis:*

Education is the bedrock for any meaningful development. Research has shown that it is the foremost tool for human capital development of any nation. However, for this to be so, the quality of such education must be high. Unfortunately, Nigeria educational system is faced with a lot of challenges. This cut across all the level of our educational system. Rivers State, being part of the Nigeria federation is not insulated from the challenges affecting Nigeria educational system. Specifically, problems ranging from lack of quality and competent teachers, lack of access to education in public schools by majority of the teaming population in the state to poor, inadequate and dilapidated class-rooms which hinder effective teaching and learning activities in our schools. The above state of our educational system in the state requires a drastic solution if the thematic focus 1 of the Youth Development policy of the State is to be attained.

In Rivers State, we have over 350 public and private secondary schools and about 8 tertiary institutions but graduates of these schools are not skillful and may not be necessarily needed in the industries. There is, therefore need to re-structure our educational system to accommodate practical industrial skill acquisition for our youth. Recent statistics have also shown that the level of school enrolment is gradually declining. The youths prefer to go into areas that will afford them quick and easy money. Unconfirmed sources had estimated that over 22% of Rivers Youth of tertiary school age are either not in school or engaged in politics, illicit trades such as oil bunkering and kidnapping of human beings for ransom.

Table 4.1: Thematic focus 1: Objectives (benchmarks) and key Implementing MDAS

Thematic Area	Improve the quality of education and skills training programs
Objectives	1: Improve the quality of education, skill training programs 2: Improve access retention and completion of Youth to education and skill acquisition programs. 3: promote equitable educational opportunities for all youths. 4: Promote life-long learning among youth.
Lead Ministry	Ministry of Education

Other key MDAs	1: Ministry of Youth Development 2: Ministry of Information and Communication 3: Office of the Deputy Governor 4: Ministry of Employment Generation and Empowerment.
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Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

A. Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: *Improve the Quality of Education and Skills Training Programs.*

There is the urgent need to review the current quality of our educational system in the state. Our educational system must be repositioned and reshaped toward the educational philosophy of pragmatism and realism. Specifically, this would require tightening of our educational curricula to reflect a result-oriented, practical, scientific and technologically-based kind of education that is capable of meeting the needs of our youth. It would equally encourage the promotion of entrepreneurial spirit in our youth as well as the promotion of requisite skill-set and mindset that is capable of engendering industrial revolution in the state.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed to ensure the realization of objective 1.

- (i) Mandatory overhaul of our educational curricula in the state by relevant Ministries and educational bodies.
- (ii) Incorporation of requisite entrepreneurship teachers and industrial training programs into our teachers' development program.
- (iii) Promoting and emphasizing the link between our educational system and the economy.
- (iv) Establishment and Promotion of technical and vocational institutions in the 23 LGAs of the state and expand the Port Harcourt craft Centre to serve as a hub in line with National Policy on Technical Education in Nigeria
- (v) Promoting teachers training and re-training programs
- (vi) Streaming of the enrollment of pupils and students into our educational system in the ratio of 60:40 in favor of science-oriented subjects and courses in line with the recommendation of our National policy on Education.
- (vii) Strengthening the quality assurance and evaluation department in our various levels of education in the state
- (viii) Ensuring the promotion of quality and regular inspections and supervision of our educational system.
- (ix) Creating conducive environment for quality teaching and learning activities in our schools through the provision of quality learning materials and basic infrastructure.
- (x) Enhancing the status of the teaching profession through adequate remuneration of teachers as well as supporting their professional training and re-training programs
- (xi) Promoting educational technology across the various levels of our educational system in the state through the building and equipping of ICT centers in our schools and the training and re-training of teachers to be ICT compliant.

Objective 2: *Improving Access of Youth to Education and Skill Training Program*

This objective emphasizes the need to enhance the access to education and other training programs by all youths in the state. It addresses the constraints in the enrollment of our youths in our educational system, the problem of affordable school fees by youths in the state, other discriminatory policies and institutional or systemic challenges that hinder the optimization of capacity-building of our youths through relevant educational and skill acquisition programs in the State.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed to ensuring the realization of objective 2:

- i. To Conduct state literacy survey to be facilitated by the Ministry of education in the state.
- ii. The State government should establish technical colleges and more science oriented primary and secondary schools in the 3 senatorial zones across the state in line with the educational needs of the youth.
- iii. One vocational training center should be established in each LGA by the state government, in partnership with I.O.Cs and other multinationals.
- iv. State government should partner with the private sector to ensure that private investors in the education sector are monitored to prevent undue exploitation.
- v. More quality training programs should be rolled out by the state government with emphasis on enriched content and “specified simplified” equitable center for their assessment by all desired youths in the state.
- vi. Government should establish more teaching institutions in the state in line with the given educational needs of the youths in the state.
- vii. There is the need for government to subsidize the cost of education in the state. This would enhance the enrollment and or admission of talented, intelligent, bright but indigent and valuable youths who may not have access to education because of their poor background or certain physical disabilities/deformities.
- viii. Establishment of special schools to accommodate youths with special or exceptional natural endowment or natural disabilities in line with the National policy on education in Nigeria.
- ix. Establishment of scholarship programs by the state government or re-invigoration of the existing ones within the available resources of the State.

Objectives 3: *Promote Equitable Access to Education Opportunities for All Youths*

To address the problem of unequal access to educational opportunities of all youths in the State; which is occasioned by several factors among which includes unequal family background, rural-urban demarcation and other natural and man-made factors; there is the need for specific interventions of the State government to ensuring that the affected groups are not deprived of their rights to education. This calls for affirmative action on the part of the State.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed to ensuring the realization of objectives 3:

- i. The government should sustain the on-going free and compulsory Basic education in the state.
- ii. Government in collaboration with all the stakeholders in the educational sector in the State should expand and or increase the establishment of special schools for the disabled and other vulnerable groups in the state.

- iii. Government should embark on an affirmative action where it will reserve 5% admission quota into our tertiary institutions to the physically challenged youths in the state.
- iv. The state should domesticate the Child Right Acts of 2003, making it mandatory for parents /guidance to make available children/wards for the 9years universal Basic education program of the state.
- v. Establishment of a remedial program in form of adult and informal Education that will address the educational needs of youths that did not attain or could not complete their secondary education.
- vi. Establishment of distant learning for children of Migrant fisher men in the State.
- vii. Ensuring gender equality at all educational levels in the State.
- viii. To recruit and train Social mobilization officers and conduct mass literacy awareness campaign in the State, using local languages

Objectives 4: *Promote Life-long Learning among Youths:*

This objective focuses on promoting Life-long Learning among Rivers youth. It emphasizes on continuous learning as a way of transmitting and imparting the requisite skills, knowledge, attitude and disposition that will make the youths in Rivers State fit-in to the 21st century knowledge based economy.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed to ensuring the realization of objective 4:

- i. The promotion of citizenship education in both formal and informal methods.
- ii. The integration of civic and leadership education into our school curricula at all levels of our educational system.
- iii. The State government should establish more vocational centers in the State.
- iv. Encouragement of in-service and on the job trainings in various public and private organizations in the State.
- v. Encouragement of apprenticeship and internship training among youths.
- vi. Promotion of Agricultural extension services in our rural areas.
- vii. Establishment and equipping of ICT centers in the three senatorial zones of the State.

4.2.2 Thematic focus II: Employment Creation through the diversification of the economy and the promotion of Entrepreneurship,

A. Situational Analysis:

Unemployment, specifically youth unemployment is a time bomb anywhere in the world. It promotes youth restiveness and other social vices in any society where it occurs.

Statistics shows that youth unemployment has been on the rise in Nigeria, Rivers Sate despite being home to several Multi-national companies, is not free from the bang of youth unemployment. In fact, the rate of youth unemployment has maintained a steady rise for more than a decade now in the State. The impact of this has been so disastrous not only in Rivers State but throughout the Niger Delta region.

The socio-economic and political implication of youth unemployment in the State and in the entire Niger Delta area has been unimaginable.

It has led to kidnapping, youth restiveness, armed robbery, oil bunkering among other social vices in the State.

To address the problem of youth unemployment the state government is expected to encourage the diversification of the state's economy from reliance on oil to agricultural and industrial development. To maximize the gains of diversification, the government is expected to encourage the promotion of entrepreneurial skills among the youths. This would help to ensuring job creation thereby encouraging their productive engagement of our youths and ensuring poverty reduction in the state.

Table 4.2: *Thematic focus II: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs*

Thematic Area:	Employment Creation and Entrepreneurship
Objectives	Objective 5: Expand Employment opportunities through diversification of the economy Objective 6: increase access of youth entrepreneurs to assets and supportive services Objective 7: Build Linkages between the industrial sector and the educational system
Lead MDA	1. Ministry of Budget and Economic planning 2. Ministry of Employment Generation and Empowerment 3. Ministry of Youth Development
Other Key MDAs	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Chieftaincy & Community Affairs Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Education

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 5: *Expand Employment Opportunities through Diversification of the Economy*

The diversification of the Economy has proven to be one of the best strategies of promoting full employment in any State. It has proven to be effective method of addressing youth unemployment in any nation. With it as a driving tool, other sectors of the economy are unlocked giving way to the attainment of full employment in any economy.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 5:

- (i) Government should support agricultural development of the state.
- (ii) Government should give soft loans to SMES in the state
- (iii) Government should establish 23 industrial centers across the 23 LGAs of the state
- (iv) Government should prudently carry out several capital projects which will help in creating job for the youths
- (v) Government should engage the multi-national companies (MNCs) operating in the state to reserve certain % of their recruitment quotas to the youths of the host community
- (vi) The MNCs and other private organization in the state should provide youths empowerment programmes as part of their Corporate Social Responsibilities to their host community and state.

- (vii) Government should explore the idea of agricultural extension services as a way of promoting agricultural development in the state.
- (viii) Government should use the instrument of fiscal policy and monetary policy to encourage the industrialization of the state.
- (ix) Government should promote tourism and support the growth of hospitality industries in the state
- (x) Government should encourage the formation of co-operative societies in the rural and urban areas of the state.
- (xi) Government should provide the enabling environment for business to thrive by providing basic amenities like good roads, potable water supply, adequate power supply as well as ensuring the security of the state.
- (xii) Government should supply existing agricultural and educational research institutes in the state and encourage them to come out with action research that will boost the agricultural and industrial development of the state.

Objective 6: Increase Access of Youth Entrepreneurs to Financial and Supportive Services

To promote youth enterprise and entrepreneurial spirit among Rivers youth, the government must strategically initiate policies that will make finance and other services available to Rivers youth that have demonstrated their entrepreneurial skills over time.

The state government can set up intervention fund to support such youths. The state can equally partner with the Rivers State Microfinance Bank, Bank of Industry, other financial institutions and other private sector institution to ensuring that such youths have access to professional and other technical services that promote their businesses.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 6:

- (i) Government should strengthen the Rivers State Micro-finance bank with the mandate for providing soft loans to youths with tested business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit.
- (ii) Government should provide supportive services to the youths in the state that have successfully run their businesses with proven results for at least a period of two years.
- (iii) Government should provide financial support to SMEs that are owned by youths from the state
- (iv) Government should enforce local content policy that enhances ingenuity of the youths in the state
- (v) Government should equally grant tax waivers to SMEs with track record of efficient management, specifically those owned by the youths from the state.
- (vi) Government should partner with the big oil companies operating in the state in the area of providing professional and managerial services that can boost the entrepreneurial spirits of the youths in the state.
- (vii) The State House of Assembly should enact business/Youth-friendly laws that can lead to ease of doing business in the state.
- (viii) Government should address the problem of the rural-urban drift by assuring that entrepreneurial centers are established in all the local governments of the states.
- (ix) Massive and adequate soft and hard infrastructures should be provided by the state throughout the 23 local governments in the state.

- (x) A Youth empowerment fund should be provided to youths with proven and tested entrepreneurial skill with a condition that such fund will be repaid without interest in the future.

Objective 7: *Building of Linkages between the Industrial Sector and the Educational System*

An effective educational system is one which is designed to ensure its linkages with the industrial sector of the economy. This makes it possible for the educational system to produce graduates that match with the needs of the industrial sector of the nation. This helps to address the problem of graduate unemployment in any state as well as ensuring quality education that manifests in the practical skills and abilities in the products of the educational system.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 7:

- (i) Government should ensure the modification of our education curricula in line with the realities of the state industrial sector.
- (ii) Government should plan the enrollment/admission process of our educational system and align it with the industrial need of the societies/state.
- (iii) Government should re-invent the industrial attachment programs of the polytechnics and ensure that the program is made compulsory for every student in the polytechnics.
- (iv) Establishment of vocational and technical colleges in the 23 LGAs should be re-emphasized and strengthened by the state government with a specific direction on what ought to be their mandates in line with the National Education Policy of Nigeria which specified areas of differences among different kind of schools to be set up by the government and their specific goals.
- (v) Government should promote life-long adult and informal education that rely much on industrial experiences of the learner.
- (vi) Government should increase funding to our research and educational institutions in order to promote Research and Development (R & D) and other action researches which can lead to practical solution to industrial challenges of the state.
- (vii) There should be a synergy between the operators of our educational system and that of the industrial or organizational managers.

42.3: Thematic focus III: *Youths in Agriculture*

A. Situational Analysis:

Prior to the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria, agriculture was the main stay of the nation's economy. It was the major source of foreign earnings for the country. During this period, the majority of the labor forces in Nigeria were absorbed in the agricultural sector. However, with the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantity in Nigeria and the subsequent exploitation and sale of crude oil and its allied products, agricultural production in Nigeria took a nosedive. This resulted to a mono-economic system of the Nigeria States, where the nation relies wholly on earning from oil to fund its public expenditure.

The above situation has led to unsustainable economic and fiscal planning by successive regimes/administrations in Nigeria. Its trickle down effects have continued to affect all the states of the federation and the various aspects of the national economy.

Specifically, the above scenario has led to high rate of unemployment with its attendant consequences in the states. This has become a worry to political leaders of the State and other

policy makers. Like other States of the Federation, Rivers State is not spared as the state and its citizens have continued to witness unemployment occasioned by the abandonment of agricultural production in the state.

To address the above problem, the state government under the administration of Chief Barrister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, has been emphasizing on the need to promote agricultural development in the state. This is seen as a necessary measure and a clarion call on the youth towards addressing the problem of unemployment in the state. It equally tallies the diversification policy of the state government-a policy that is also seen as a strategy of curving youth unemployment in the state.

B. Objectives, Implementing Framework and Strategies

Table 4.3: Thematic focus III: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs

Thematic Area	Youth in Agriculture
Objectives	Objectives 8: Promote Active Youth involvement in agriculture for food, security and job creation & social development.
Lead ministry	Ministry of Agriculture
Other key ministries/agencies	Ministry of Education Ministry of Water Resources & Rural development Ministry of Commerce & industry Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Ministry of Transport Ministry of Employment Generation & Empowerment

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 8: Promote Active Youth Involvement in Agriculture for State Food Security, Job Creation and Social Development

In line with solving the problem of unemployment, the state government aims at engaging the youths in agricultural productions and its allied businesses. This holds the potential of ensuring food, security, and job creation in the state, as well as the promotion of social development in the state.

Strategies:

The following are needed for the realization of the 8th objective:

- (i) The State government should direct the Rivers State Micro-Finance Bank to provide soft loans to encourage agro-allied businesses run by youths of the state.
- (ii) The State Microfinance bank should link Young Agric-entrepreneurs to the multi-billion Naira CBN MSME fund
- (iii) Promotion of rural development based on rural agriculture.
- (iv) The state Assembly should enact laws that make is possible for the people to use their land without restriction.
- (v) Promotion of agricultural extension services to rural farmers.
- (vi) Government should ensure the provision of rural infrastructure and other basic amenities.
- (vii) Formation of co-operative societies by rural farmers.
- (viii) The revitalization of the school –to-land agricultural program in the State

- (ix) Government should set up youth Agricultural Incubation Centre, Enterprise Development Centres and Youth Farm Settlement System in the three senatorial zones and 23 LGAs of the State respectively.

4.2.4 Thematic focus IV: *Youth and ICT*

A. *Situation Analysis.*

In a world of globalization driven by information and communication Technology, it is unthinkable, even as it is impracticable for anyone to participate in the global economy without adequate skills in Information and Communication Technology. This is why it is vital for every youth in River state to acquire needed skills in Information and Technology if he or she must be part of the drivers of the state's economy.

Indeed, with adequate knowledge of ICT and its essential skills, the youths can use their creative ideas to productively engage in the economy thereby helping to create jobs and contribute to the overall economic development of the state.

To attain the above goal, there is the need for government to roll out empowerment programs that would ensure that youths in Rivers State are fully trained and equipped with essential skills in ICT so as to enable them to actively and responsively participate in the economy of the state.

This would help the youths to be self-reliant and to contribute towards job creation thereby helping to reduce youth unemployment in the state.

Table 4.4: Thematic focus IV: Youth and ICT (Objectives and key Implementing MDAs)

Thematic Areas	Youth and ICT
Objectives	Objective 9: To enhance the production and capacity of youths through trainings in ICT to create employment
Lead MDA	Office of the SA to the Governor on ICT
Other Key MDAs	Ministry of Education Ministry of Information and Communication Ministry of Youth Development

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 9: *To enhance the Productive Capacity of the Youths through Training and Retraining in ICT*

To reverse the growing trend in youth unemployment and to address its attendant Social-economic and political effects, the state government must embark on massive training and re-training of youth in the area of ICT. This would help the youths in the state to fully harness the opportunities that exist in today's Global economy that is driven by unprecedented developments in Information and Communication Technology.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 9:

- (i) The state government should establish ICT centers in the 23 LGAs and expand the existing ICT center in the state as a referral hub
- (ii) The state government should employ and equip ICT professionals and experts to manage the centers
- (iii) The state owned public schools should be fully furnished with functional ICT centers.

- (iv) There is need to incorporate training and re-training in ICT as part of the teachers' Development programmes.
- (v) Effort should be sustained in making ICT as part of our state educational/school curricula.
- (vi) The state government should partner with other stakeholders in making sure that at least 75-85% of Rivers youth are ICT compliant.
- (vii) Corporate organizations and or the MNCs in the state should make ICT empowerment programme a priority, as part of their social cooperate responsibility/ role to host communities/state.
- (viii) The State government should emulate the federal government in creating a digital economy by creating a separate Ministry for it or modifying the Ministry of information and Communicate to accommodate it.

4.3 Strategic Thrust 2: Healthy and health-promoting Lifestyle

Health of the youths tells so much in the analysis of youth development index of the State. There is therefore need to encourage youth-healthy programmes and activities that will contribute to the attainment of the highest status of health with respect to prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The government will promote efforts geared towards activities that will promote youth- friendly and health-related behaviors and lifestyles.

4.3.1: Thematic focus V: *Quality Health Services and Healthy Behavior*

A. *Situational Analysis:*

There are certain health challenges that youths of the State are faced with. These are grouped into:

1. Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

SHR include but not limited to HIV and AIDS, and other Sexually Transmitted infections, maternal health conditions (early pregnancy and teenage motherhood, unsafe abortion, other maternal morbidity and mortalities; and gender-based violence such as rape, sexual coercion and female genital mutilation.

The National health and Demographic Survey (2010) show that there was an increase in the number of HIV infection in the State, such that Rivers State was ranked first in the country with a prevalence rate of 15%. Youths aged 15 to 35years accounted for over 62% of total infection. The result has however changed in the 2019 NAHS report. Rivers is now 3.8% and ranked No. 3, after Akwa-Ibom (5.6%) and Benue (4.9%) States, respectively.

2. Mental health and Substance abuse

The incidence and prevalence of mental health cases among the youths in the State is alarming. This case account for many psychiatric hospital admissions in the State and is mainly attributed to substance abuse (smoking of Indian hemp, sniffing of hard drugs etc.). This phenomenon has led to economic hardship in young families and increase in divorce rates in the State.

3. Injuries and Violence

The rate of injuries and violence among youths in the state was very high in the years back. This was attributed to cult clashes and motorcycle and auto-crashes leading to fatal and near-fatal accidents sometimes due to the bad state of our roads. This has in turn worsen the economic situation and contributed to increased unemployment rate of youth.

4. Nutrition

There are disease conditions that are caused or attributed to poor nutrition. Today, eating of unhealthy diets in eateries/fast food outlets is the mainstay among youth. If you are not eating in Kilimanjaro, Mr. Biggs, Chicken Republic or Genesis you are looked upon as a “Jew or village guy” who cannot measure up. Research has shown that a lot our youths are either obese/overweight due to the habit of eating junk foods (and this trend is increasing by the day) or getting malnourished due to under-nutrition and poverty. Among young girls teenage pregnancy also contributes to anemia.

Generally, government should encourage the use of public health facilities by youths and promote youth-friendly health services. This will make youths to attend clinics without fear of stigmatization or rejection.

B. Objectives, Implementing Framework & Strategies

Table 4.5: Thematic focus V: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs

Thematic Areas	Health Services
Objectives	Objective 10: Improve the quality of youth-related health care services Objective 11: Improve the coverage of health care services for youth Objective 12: Promote appropriate health behavior, including sports and leisure-time activities
Lead MDA	Ministry of Health
Other Key MDAs	Ministry of Education Ministry of Information and Communication Ministry of Youth Development

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 10: Improve the Quality of Youth-related Health Care Services in the State

This is a proven fact that quality health services improve the productive capacity of the work force in any economy. To enhance the productive capacity of the youths in River state requires the improvement in the health-care delivery system of the state. This also requires greater investment of government on the health sector and the effective monitoring of health care providers (HCP) in the state. It equally needs specific intervention of the state government from time to time, to ensuring that such quality health services are accessible and affordable by the citizens of the state, including the youths.

Strategies

- (i) The state government also needs to equip the government owned hospitals with state of the Art equipment.
- (ii) Domesticcate and develop the adolescent-and youth-friendly health policy in the State and the implementation of the National Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescents Health (RMNCAH) Quality of Care Strategy
- (iii) The state government should equally implement its health insurance scheme and where necessary amend its Act in line with the current realities in the health sector

- (iv) There should be adequate and regular payment of the health care providers/professionals in the state to ensure their motivation
- (v) Government must constantly monitor, supervise and evaluate health care providers under its service to ensure compliance from their professional and ethical codes
- (vi) Government must partner with other stakeholders in the health sector to ensure adequate investment of funds in the sector which will drive efficient service delivery in the sector.

Objective 11: *Improving the Coverage of Health Care Services for the Youths in the State*

Besides improvement in the health care services of the state, there is an additional need to ensuring that such health care services are fully available in all the 23 LGAs of the state. In this way, youths in various local government areas of the state can access such services for their quality health.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 11:

- (i) The state government must ensure that primary health centers are operational and functional in all the local government areas of the state
- (ii) The state government should equally renovate and equip the secondary health services and make them functional in the 23 LGAs of the state
- (iii) Complete and commission the Zonal hospitals and the Mother and Child Hospital in the State.
- (iv) Construction and maintenance of access roads leading to the state capital which will make teaching hospitals accessible in terms of health services.
- (v) Recruitment of adequate Health Care Providers (HCP) and their widespread posting across the facilities in the state.
- (vi) The sustenance of the free anti-retroviral treatment for youths living with HIV.
- (vii) Ensuring periodic immunization exercise across the 23 Local government areas of the state against certain preventable diseases and other viral diseases such as cervical cancer.

Objective 12: *Promoting Appropriate Health behaviors, Including engagement in sporting and other acceptable Leisure-Time Activities*

Most health problems that affect human beings specifically the youths are traceable to risky behaviors and such ailments can be prevented and avoidable, through a carefully and well-presented orientation program, a balanced mental, physical and spiritual exercises as well as appropriate nutritional intakes. These measures have been proven to be effective in ensuring sound health of the youth which translates into their maximum productivity in the economy of the State.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 12

1. The State government should continue to promote school inter-house sports competition in the State
2. The State government should continue to promote sporting competition among youths in the State.
3. The government should partner with Faith-Based organizations in the State to ensure moral teaching and impartation of spiritual exercise on the youths

4. The State orientation agency should partner with health professionals in the State to ensuring appropriate and adequate orientation and coaching of the youth in the habit of “eating right”.
5. The State Government should continue to invest in leisure-related establishments /programs such as the Port Harcourt Pleasure Park, along Port Harcourt-Aba express way.
6. The campaign against HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer, sickle cell disease, hepatitis B and other deadly but preventable diseases within and outside the school system should be strengthened and sustained.
7. Special emphasis should be placed on right moral and ethical behaviors of youths specifically as it relates to their sex life.
8. The State government should intensify its fight against rape, sex related crimes and other gender-based violence against the youth
9. The State government should also partner with relevant NGOs and WHO towards enhancing acceptable health behaviors among the youth.

4.4 Strategic Thrust 3: *Promotion of Participatory, Inclusive and Equal Opportunities for all Youths in the State*

Participation of youths in the current political dispensation and inclusion of youths in the developmental process of government is very important for socio-political development of youths. The common adage of “Carry us along” by youths of the State is vital for understanding as it encourages meaningful engagement, inclusion and provide equal opportunities and open interaction between key players in government and youths of the State. This is particularly so for the less privilege, physically challenged and vulnerable group for ease of participation in community development, politics and governance. There should be a periodic interphase in the form of “quarterly town hall meeting with the Governor” and this should be coordinated by the Ministry of Youth Development and supported by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to ensure the social development of our pragmatic youths

4.4.1 Thematic Focus VI: Civic Engagement

A. *Situation Analysis:*

Civic/Political engagement of youths in Rivers State is very key toward participatory and inclusive political and socio-economic involvement of the youths in the State. Such interactive forum and political platform is expected to be utilized for the education of the youths on their rights and responsibility towards the government and the need for their involvement in the politics and governance of the state.

It enables the youth not only to demand accountability from their elected political leaders but also to imbibe democratic norms that help them to support the public policies of the state and where necessary, make their inputs. It equally helps the youths to exhibit acceptable social values that enhance their socio-economic and political interactions with fellow citizens. The end result becomes political stability and equitable distribution of “economic, social and democratic dividends” among the citizens of the state.

B. Objectives, Implementing Framework and Strategies

Table 4.6 Thematic focus VI: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs

Thematic Area	Civic Engagement
Objectives	Objectives 13: Strengthen the platform and capacity for youth engagement and participation. Objective 14: Create platforms and enabling environment for the inclusion of marginalized youth Objective 15: Strengthen intergenerational relationships and solidarity
Lead ministry	Ministry of Youth Development
Other key MDAs	Ministry of Sports Ministry of Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Ministry of Women Affairs Ministry of Information & Communication Ministry of Employment Generation & Empowerment

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 13: *Strengthening the Platforms for Civic Engagement and Political Participation of the Youths*

Civic engagement of the youth plays a very significant role toward successful transition of the youth to adulthood. It equally molds the youth towards a responsible performance of their individual and social roles in the society. Such engagements happen at both the formal and informal levels and are carried out by the agents of socialization in the state. These agents include the family, the school, FBOs, the mass media and the political parties among others.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 13?

- i. Government should promote the teaching of civic education in our schools with emphasis on field trip and participatory teaching methods.
- ii. Strengthening of youth based, focused, gender sensitive and community-based organizations (CBOS)
- iii. The government should promote grass-root and street youth democratic movements.
- iv. Promotion of democratic values in our schools.
- v. The government should institute a regular Town hall meeting with the youth at community levels for a positive interface between the government and the youths.

- vi. The State Ministry of Information and Communication through LGA information officers and National Orientation Agency should constantly engage the youths
- vii. The government should promote the teaching of civic education via the radio and television.
- viii. The government should institute a “State Youth Award Scheme” to appreciate and honour exceptional youths in all endeavor.
- ix. The government should set aside a minimum of 10% to physically challenged, vulnerable and other disadvantaged youths in governance.
- x. The political parties should encourage youth registration/membership and also give them positions of leadership.
- xi. Religious organizations should encourage the mentoring of youth and ensure their proper grooming toward political/leadership role in the society.
- xii. NGOs should initiate and support mentoring programmes for the youths in the State, specifically in the area of leadership/Political roles and responsibility in the society.

Objective 14: Creating Platforms and Initiating Affirmative Action for the Empowerment of Marginalized Youths in the State.

To ensure the participation of marginalized and vulnerable youth in the political process of the State, specific actions and laws must be initiated by the Rivers State House of Assembly and see to its passage and implementation by the executive. Such groups of youth include: those with disabilities, teenage mothers, youths from the streets and from poor backgrounds, the out of school youths and other vulnerable youths. Such affirmative action or laws will serve as commitment and political will on the part of Government and a sort of empowerment to the youth.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 14:

- i. Government should come up with empowerment programme for the disabled youths and the most vulnerable among them.
- ii. Government should initiate an affirmative action to protect such vulnerable youths and ensure their involvement in the political process and governance of the State.
- iii. Government should provide economic and social welfare palliatives for such vulnerable youths.
- iv. Special scholarship programme should be given to such youths to enhance their education, which will serve as a stepping stone for their meaningful political participation.
- v. Government should develop preventive, rehabilitative and re-integration programmes for the vulnerable youths like the drug addicts, repentant cultists, militants and sex workers.

Objective 15: *Strengthening Inter-Generational Relationships and Solidarity.*

Experience, even though it may not be the best method of learning is necessary for youth mentoring. This requires positive and effective grooming of the younger generation by the older generation. Political mentoring by role models, elderly and experienced people can go a long way to helping the youths to overcome certain mistakes as they are mobilized and re-integrated to perform their civic/political leadership roles and responsibilities in the society. It affords the youth the opportunity of gaining tremendous political knowledge, skills and disposition necessary for participation in democratic governance. It equally benefits the political mentor as it provides platform for helpful services to the mentor. Such inter-generational political intercourse, effectively done will enhance political solidarity and cohesion of the state.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 15:

- i) Social learning that depicts sound and positive political mentoring should be aired in the media.
- ii) The government should encourage community based interactive and mentorship programme between youths and the older generations.
- iii) Political parties should provide informal opportunities where the youth members of the party can relate positively with the elderly.
- iv) The youths should voluntarily approach any of the older politicians whom they consider as role model and request for such relationship.
- v) Partly Leaders and elected office-holders can endear themselves to the youths through their excellent performance and exhibition of sound Leadership qualities, thereby naturally attracting youths for political mentorship.

4.4. 2: Thematic Focus VII: Political Inclusion

A. Situation Analysis:

Political inclusion in any democratic political system is a desideration. This involves the widening of the political space in a manner that accommodates people from different backgrounds irrespective of their religious backgrounds sex, age and other subjective disenfranchising factors. Such a measure enriches the political system. It strengthens the democratic political system making it competitive for all stake- holders.

In Rivers State, an inclusive political system will afford the youths the opportunity to demonstrate their Leadership potentials and showcase their talents both in the political process and other socio-economic ventures.

Nigeria has a rich political history where many of the foremost nationalists started their political careers when they were youths. Most of them left impressive marks in the political history of Nigeria. In the same way, opening the political space for the youths would enable them master how to climb the political robe in time. However, for this to happen, other limiting factors that work against the youths must be addressed. These factors include lack of money, lack of political experience, and low level of education, just to mention a few.

Indeed, removing the barriers that militate against the participation of the youths in the political process of the state is one of the ways of encouraging the youths to contribute to the socio-economic and political development of the state. This has several benefits that are worthwhile.

B. Objectives, Implementing Framework and Strategies

Table 4.7: Thematic focus VII: Objectives and key Implementing MDAs.

Thematic Area	Political Inclusion
Objectives	Objectives 16: To engage the capacities of youth and youth-led organizations to engage actively with the political processes at all levels. Objective 17: To foster an enabling environment for youth engagement with the political processes at all levels
Lead ministry & Commission	Ministry of Youth Development Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission (RISIEC)
Other key MDAs & legislature	Ministry of Justice Ministry of Information & Communication Rivers State House of Assembly

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 16: Enhancing the Capacities of Youths and Youth-led Organizations to Promote their Active Political Engagement in the Political Processes at all levels.

The youths are critical stakeholders in any democratic political system. They have their potentials to influence the political process of any State. However, there are certain constraints that hinder their participatory role in politics. Such constraints include limited knowledge, experience, and lack of money as well as institutional and legal constraints.

To promote the active participation of the youths in the political process requires their full empowerment in the forms of capacity-building, creative economic opportunities for the youth's as well as granting them legal and institutional support. It equally requires supporting youth-led organizations and strengthening such organizations as vital platforms for, the mobilization of the

youths in the politics of their state. These measures enhance their active participation in the political process of the state.

Strategies

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 16:

- i) Government must promote and or support grass-roots democratic politics.
- ii) The state government must throw its weight on the “Not Too Young to Run” Act recently enacted by the National Assembly.
- iii) Political parties should reserve some of their Leadership positions for the youth outside the existing ones.
- iv) Strengthening of the capacities of youths for political engagement through training, political mentorship and promotion of citizenship education.
- v) Strengthening the capacity of Youth-Led organizations through professional and technical support with the view of making such groups harness the potentials of the youths.
- vi) Political parties must be willing to recruit youth into elective positions.
- vii) Empowerment of young women through financial support and other affirmative measures.

Objective 17: Fostering or Creating an Enabling Environment for Political Involvement of the Youths in Politics at all levels.

To ensure full and active participation of Rivers-youth in the political process of the State, the State government and other political actors must provide the enabling environment for inclusive participation of all the youths in the political processes of the state. This can be through Legal, regulatory, empowerment and policy measures.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 17:

- i) Advocacy by NGO and other stakeholders for the faithful implementation of “Not – Too – Young – To – Run law”.
- ii) Advocacy for reservation of 25% seats for the youths in the Rivers State House of Assembly and 23 Local government councils in the states.
- iii) Political mobilization and education of youth in the state by both the political parties and the Non-Governmental organization.
- iv) Promoting credible, free and fair democratic elections in the state.

- v) Ensuring that all forms of political violence and youth restiveness are stopped by addressing their root causes.
- vi) Adequate sanctions against perpetrators of political violence

Strategies Thrust 4: Protection of the Rights of the Youths and the Promotion of Conducive Environment for Youth Development

The youths of Rivers State require an environment devoid of abuse, violence and discrimination. Harassment from security agencies and exploitation must be disallowed if their inert potentials must be harness for effective and productive engagement for the good of the State. Any society or environment that does not recognize the rights and privileges of the youth does not equally want to promote peace, freedom and safeguard their fundamental human rights. When there is violence and armed conflicts development of the youth is affected. This is why the United Nation recognizes peace and security as drivers and enablers of youth development in any nation.

4.5.1 Thematic focus VIII: Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Youth.

A) Situation Analysis:

The fundamental rights of the citizens are guaranteed under section 4 of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria as amended. The enjoyment of these rights is imperative for the full realization of the potentials of every human being. These rights are seen to be in tandem with the four basic freedoms of man highlighted in the state of the Union's address by former president of America, Franklin Roosevelt, and many years ago. These four freedoms of man are: Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from fear and freedom from want. It is believed that these fundamental human rights and the four aforementioned freedoms of man enable the full realization of human potentials while their denial encumbers the growth of human beings.

Despite the universal proclamation of the above rights in 1948 and their domestication in Nigerian Constitution, the enjoyment of these rights has not been total in Nigeria. There have been certain cases of violation in form of extra-judicial killings by law enforcement agencies, child abuse, and domestic violence just to mention but a few. The youths have been the major victims of the above violation of fundamental Human rights and freedoms of man.

More efforts are needed on the part of state and non-state actors in order to effectively guarantee the enjoyment of these rights, especially by the youth. This would help to ensure their full development thereby leading to their fruitful contributions in the socio-economic and political development of the state.

In Rivers State, boys are more at the receiving end unlike in the North. The young boys are easily persuaded to go into apprenticeship instead of pursuing education in order to earn a living. The rights of young girls are however sometimes also infringed upon as their poor parents easily succumb to giving them out in marriage or encourage them to go into prostitution.

B) Objectives: Implementing Framework and Strategies.

Table 4.8: Thematic focus VIII: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs

Thematic Area	Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom of Youth
Objectives	Objectives 18: Develop and enforce gender-sensitive laws and policies that promote and protect the human rights of all youth.
Lead MDAs	Ministry of Justice Rivers State House of Assembly
Other key MDAs	Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of Women Affairs Ministry of Information & Communication Ministry of Sports

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 18: Developing and Enforcing Gender Sensitive Laws and Policies that Protect Human Rights of All Youth.

The promotion and protection of human right laws of youth is important towards the agenda of their development. This is because of the critical roles such rights play towards the smooth transition of youth into adulthood and their impacts in performance of their adult roles in the society.

To achieve the above desired goals, the state government needs to intensify efforts towards the protection and promotion of human rights of the youth in the state, including gender sensitive policies that touch on elimination of all forms of abuse, discrimination and violation against women and young persons.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 18:

- i) Sensitization and education of young people on their fundamental rights and basic freedoms.
- ii) Engaging the youths through mainstream media and social media on values that protect them from abuse and safeguard their rights.
- iii) Constant engagement with the law enforcement agencies in the state on the need to respect the basic rights of youth
- iv) Strengthening advocacy on the enforcement of appropriate legislations and policies relating to the rights of young people living with HIV and youth with disabilities.

- v) Establishing a platform for peaceful engagement of youth with policy makers, law enforcement agents, and community leaders on how to protect these rights.
- vi) Supporting youth-led and youth -focused organizations in the state with a focus on their roles towards enhancing the protection of the rights of youth.

4.1.9 Thematic focus IX: Peace and Security

A) Situational Analysis

Development can only be possible in a peaceful environment hence, peace and security is a pre-condition for the development of any state. Rivers State, because of its strategic resources and as part of the Niger Delta Area, has been a hotbed of youth violence in recent past. Since the inception of the present Administration in the State, efforts have been made to ensuring the peace and security in the state. These efforts have yielded the desired results as we now see a peaceful and secured Rivers State. However, there is need for sustained efforts towards ensuring peace and security of the state. This requires vigilance on the part of the security and law enforcement agents in the state, constant engagement of youth and the state government on the need for youths in the state to shun youth violence and other forms of criminalities. There is also the need for the state government to explore other social-economic measures to address the issues of kidnapping, cultism, youth restiveness, armed robbery, and other forms of crime that are mostly committed by youth. Such socio-economic measures together with other crime control measures already put in place by the state government would ensure a peaceful and secured Rivers State. This would translate into economic prosperity of the state and its political stability.

B) Objectives. Implementing Framework and Strategies

Table 4.9: Thematic focus IX: Objectives and key implementing MDAS.

Thematic Area	Peace and Security
Objectives	Objectives 19: Protect Youth from direct involvement in armed conflicts, and the effects of conflict and violence
Lead MDAs	Nigeria Police, DSS, NSCDC
Other key MDAs	Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of Information & Communication Ministry of Justice

Adopted from National

Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 19: Enlightening the Youths on the Danger of Armed Conflict and other forms of Criminalities.

Peace building mechanism is part of the strategies of ensuring the peace and security of any state. Peace education and other peace building mechanisms have been found to be effective tools for crime prevention in any state. They have proven to be effective containment measures against youth violence and criminal tendencies.

Peace Education can be carried out through the formal and informal methods. In either method, the idea has been to inculcate the mindset of tolerance and the need to embrace dialogue and conflict resolution as tools to resolve social disputes. It equally emphasizes the culture of self-reliance and the need for citizens to desist from all forms of criminality and violent disposition. Through peace education, the governments can address the problems of youth violence, armed conflicts, cultism, armed robbery, drug abuse and other associated crimes common among youths.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 19:

- i) Promoting peace education in our schools and incorporating it as parts of the curriculum.
- ii) Educating the youths on the need to embracing peaceful resolution mechanisms as ways of settling their disputes.
- iii) Sensitization of youths on social skills and the importance of positive communication.
- iv) Community engagement of youths on the dangers of violent crimes by relevant NGOS.
- v) Enlightenment programmes that emphasizes on inculcating the values of love, honesty, trust, patience and respect of the rights and genuine interest of other youths.
- vi) Promoting the culture of fairness, social justice and Mutual Corporation in the socio-economic and political relationship of youths.

4.6 Strategies Thrust 5: Building Effective Partnership and Collaboration among Stakeholders and other Development Partners in Youth Development”

This policy framework has stated that youth development effort is a multi-faceted venture that requires the cooperation, collaboration and partnership between the Ministry of Youth Development and other stakeholders if the desired goal must be achieved. There is need for Professionals in various fields of youth development and skills to come together to develop the youth. This is particularly so if a state have youths not employed, not educated nor trained. This will drive such youths to different kinds of social vices and crimes. The policy therefore beckons on multi-nationals, IOCs, NGOs and other stakeholders to collaborate with the Ministry in this respect so as to implement and drive the youth to productive and result-oriented future.

4.6.1 Thematic focus X: Capacity for Promoting Youth Development Agenda

A. Situation Analysis

Youth Development has been the main focus of successive administrations in the State. The target goal has been on how to make Rivers youth economically active and productive and socio-politically vibrant.

In the bid to achieve the above goal, so many youth development programs had been planned and executed by the Government. In fact, the Ministry of Youth Development was specifically created for this purpose. The ministry, since its inception in 2008, had executed several youth development programs in the State. These programs included youth skills acquisition training in Agriculture, aqua-culture, ICT, construction, welding and fabrication etc. The Ministry also has the mandate of monitoring, supervising and evaluating the activities of the National Youth Council of Nigeria and other youth organizations in the State.

B. Objectives, Implementing Framework and Strategies

4.10: Thematic focus X: Objectives and Key Implementing MDAs

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Thematic Area	Capacity for promoting Youth Development Agenda
Objectives	Objectives 20: Strengthening the capacity of government agencies for promoting youth development agenda Objective 21: Strengthening professional development and professionalism in youth work. Objective 22: Strengthening the capacity of youth-led organizations for youth work
Lead MDAs	Ministry of Youth Development Ministry of Women Affairs Citizenship & Leadership Training Center, Allu
Other key MDAs	Ministry of Information & Communication National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN)

Objective 20: Strengthening the Capacity of Government Agencies for Promoting Youth Development Agenda in the State:

The goal of the objective is to strengthen government institutions and agencies that will in one way or the other involve in the implementation of the goals of youth development policy in the state. It is expected that such government agencies will be streamlined and repositioned to enable them implements this youth development policy in line with its set goals by encouraging a budget line for youth development agenda. The Ministry of Youth Development is expected to serve as the coordinating Ministry and as such would set the templates for the successful implementation of the new policy.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 20:

- i. The establishment of coordinating mechanisms by the Youth Development Ministry
- ii. Annual budgeting for “State Youth Development Fund”.
- iii. Strengthening of institutional framework for monitoring of the activities of agencies in the process of implementing the youth development policy.
- iv. The youth development Ministry should develop a youth database and ensure its periodic updates.
- v. Government should develop a strategic partnership with the private sector and other development partners on the funding of youth development policy in the state.

Objective 21: *Encouraging Professional Development and Professionalism in Youth Development Programmes*

It is expected that in the process of implementing the new youth development policy in the state, efforts should be made to ensuring professionalism and professional development of experts that would drive the youth development programme in the State. The MDAs and other stakeholders, particularly the academia and training institutions that would be involved in the implementation of the youth development programmes in the State. The Ministry must encourage the professional development and professionalism of the facilitators of such programmes. The personnel that would lead the implementation of the program must be fully trained and retrained to enable them discharge their duties efficiently and effectively. They must strictly adhere to their professional

codes and display high level of moral discipline if the goals of the youth development policy must be realized.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 21:

- (i) Government should establish youth development institute for capacity-building to ensure service delivery.
- (ii) The Ministry of youth development should develop periodic capacity building mechanism to ensure effective policy implementation.
- (iii) The government should partner with other development partners with the view of accessing technical and professional supports on the implementation of youth development policy.
- (iv) The government should initiate leadership training programmes to ensure maximum results on policy implementation.
- (v) The Ministry of youth development should set up feedback/monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to track the inputs of the implementing agents and their challenges.
- (vi) The Ministry of youth development should also set up evaluation and review processes to ensure the improvement or correction of short-comings on the part of implementing agents and personnel.

Objective 22: Strengthening the Capacity of Youth-led Organizations for Maximum Results on Youth Programmes in the State.

To achieve the goals of youth development policy in the state, the government should institute mechanisms to undertake regular assessment of the organizational capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organizations in the state. This is to access and revalidate their potential and capacity for the realization of the goals of the youth development policy of the state.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 22:

- (i) Government should ensure periodic capacity building programmes/workshops for youth leaders and youth focused organization.
- (ii) Government should ensure regular monitoring and revalidation of youth organizations periodically before approval of youth related activities.
- (iii) Government should consider the reinstatement of grants to functional youth focused NGOs and National Youth Council of Nigeria in the State to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their programmes.

- (iv) Government and other stakeholders should organize periodic capacity-building programmes for credible youth leaders to boost their capacity and moral and financial support where necessary.
- (v) Government should partner with other development partners in supporting credible and result oriented youth leaders in ensuring their participation in the training of youths across the state.

4.6.2 Thematic focus XI: Sustainable Platforms for Multi-sectoral Collaboration.

A. Situational Analysis:

In the State, the Ministry of Youth Development is the arm of government empowered by extant laws and Government orders to supervise and serve as a leading and coordinating Ministry for all initiatives that relate to youth development. The Ministry of Youth, therefore serve as a hub to coordinate all sectors; be it the organized private sector, the multi-nationals, International development partners, academia and research institutions, IOCs and Civil Society Organizations. These are sectors that have youth development agenda in their operations. For there to be synergy, there is need for a coordinating body for sustenance of all inputs and diversity from these stakeholders.

Several training/skill acquisition programs for our young boys and girls facilitated by foundation for Partnership Initiative for Niger Delta (PIND) and sponsored by Ford Foundation/Chevron in the area of aqua-culture and ICT, was coordinated by the Ministry of Youth Development. It is worthwhile to note that several multi-lateral and bilateral agencies have contributed to youth development agenda at the Federal level, but little or no impact is created or felt at the State level. Agencies such as World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), International Labour Organization (ILO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have neither collaborated with the Ministry nor carried out any youth development project to the knowledge of the Ministry. In line with their mandate and the youth policy direction, the Ministry will make special approaches/meetings for their support and assistance towards youth development in the State.

Rivers State is among the oil rich states in Nigeria and there is abundance of companies exploring oil and gas, and other areas such as construction, the Ministry is empowered by the policy to explore ways and bring these multi-nationals to mandatorily support and assist in the youth development efforts of the State government.

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B. Objectives, Implementing Framework and Strategies

Table 4.11: Thematic focus XI: Objectives and key Implementing MDAs

Thematic Area	Sustainable Platform for Multi-Sectorial Collaboration
Objectives	Objectives 23: Establishing and operationalizing sustainable platforms for multi-sectorial collaboration
Lead MDAs	Ministry of Youth Development
Other key MDAs	Ministry of Information & Communication Ministry of Justice, Health, Women Affairs and Education Ministry of Finance Ministry of Agriculture

Adopted from National Youth Policy (2019)

Objective 23: Establishing and Operationalizing Sustainable Platforms for Multi-Sectorial Collaboration.

To realize the overall goal of the youth Development policy in the state requires effective partnership and collaboration among stakeholders. This also requires the establishment of “**Multi-sectoral Youth Development Council**” which would be made up of representatives of other stakeholder groups like the civil society organization, research and academic institutions in the state, the organized private sector, international development agencies and youth organizations across the state. To ensure efficiency in the working of this group needs effective government funding of the meetings and operations of the working groups. It equally requires institutionalization of effective mechanisms, for the monitoring and evaluation of their programmes and activities.

Strategies:

The following strategies are needed for the realization of objective 23:

- (i) Adequate funding of the youth programmes/projects/activities through collaboration and partnership among stakeholders.
- (ii) Adequate budgetary allocation to agencies involved in the implementation of youth programmes.
- (iii) Periodic monitoring and Evaluation of the activities of “Youth Development technical working Group” by the Ministry.
- (iv) Establishment of a multi-sectoral Youth Development Council to achieve policy objectives.

4.7: Summary of the Strategic Thrusts, Thematic Areas and key Objectives

Following the above stated 5 strategic thrusts, a total of 11 thematic areas with 23 linked key objectives with accompanying implementation framework and benchmarks are enumerated in the table below:

Summary of Thematic Areas and Policy Objectives

Table: 4.12 Summary of Thematic Areas and Policy Objectives

Thematic Focus	Objectives
Strategic Thrust 1: Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth	
1. Education, capacity/building and skills development	1. Improve the quality of Education and skill training programmes 2. Improve access, retention and completion of youth to education and skill acquisition programmes 3. Promote equitable access to educational opportunities for all youth 4. Promote life-long learning among youth
2. Employment creation and entrepreneurship	5. Expand employment opportunities through diversification of the economy 6. Increase access of youth entrepreneurs to assets and supportive services 7. Build Linkages between the industrial sector and the educational system
3. Youth in Agriculture	8. Promote active youth involvement in agriculture for state food security, job creation, and social justice
4. Youth and ICT	9. Enhance youth capacity and expand the use of ICT to drive youth creativity and productive engagements, employment, and development
Thematic Focus	Objectives
Strategic Thrust II Health and Health- Promoting Lifestyles	
Health Services and healthy behavior	10. Improve the services of youth-related health care services 11. Improve the coverage of health care services for youth 12. Promote appropriate health behavior, including sports and leisure-time activities
Strategic Thrust III Participation, Inclusiveness and Equitable Opportunities for All Youth	
6. Civic Engagement	13. Strengthening the platform and capacity for youth engagement and participation 14. Create platforms and enabling environment for the inclusion of marginalized youth 15. Strengthen intergenerational relationship and solidarity
7. Political Inclusion	16. Enhance the capacities of youth and youth –led organizations to engage actively with the political process at all levels

	17. Foster an enabling environment for youth engagement with the political processes at all levels
Strategic Thrust IV	
Ensure Promotive and Protective Environment for Youth	
8. Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom of Youth	18. Develop and enforce gender-sensitive laws and policies that promote and protect the human rights of all youth
9. Peace and Security	19. Protect youth from direct involvement in armed conflicts
Strategic Thrust V	
Effective Partnership Building and Collaboration in Youth Development	
10. Capacity for promoting Youth development Agenda	20. Strengthening the capacity of government agencies for promoting youth development agenda 21. strengthening professional development and professionalism in youth work 22. Strengthening the capacity of youth-led organization for youth work
11. Sustainable platform for multi-sectoral collaboration	23. Establishing and operationalizing sustainable platforms for multi-sectoral collaboration

Adopted from NYP, 2019

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CHAPTER FIVE

POLICY BENCHMARKS

The policy benchmarks adopted here is as applicable to Rivers State. They are driven by the five strategic thrusts of the National Youth Policy (2019) and are expected to be achieved within the policy period of 4 years.

Table 5.1: Policy Benchmarks

STRATEGIC THRUSTS	POLICY BENCHMARKS
<p>1. Productive workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth</p>	<p>EDUCATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Bursary to Rivers youth in tertiary institutions within and outside Nigeria - Free Education at primary and secondary levels in the 23 LGAs of the State - Establish schools for the physically challenged and those with special needs in each of the 3 senatorial zones in the State - Establish, equip and employ 100 teachers in 10 schools for migrant fishermen and women from the coastal communities in the State over the next 4 years - Establish adult/evening school program for young school drop-outs - Employment and Training/retraining of 100 teachers per LGA over the next 4 years for our primary and secondary schools in the State. - Entrepreneurship Training/Capacity building Programmes. <p>EMPLOYMENT CREATION and ENTREPRENEURSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills Acquisition Training of 100 youths/LGA in various skills over the next 4 years - Create an average of 2000 jobs per year i.e.8000 jobs over the 4 year policy period - Create opportunities for youth entrepreneurs to have access to the N25 billion CBN MSME fund in the State. - Granting of interest-free loans to 100 youth entrepreneurs in the 23 LGAs over the next 4years - Establish one Incubation Center in Port Harcourt or Obio/Akpor and 23 Vocational Training or Enterprise Development Centers in the State over the next 4 years. <p>YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilization/Engagement of 100 youths/LGA to be interested in Rivers ‘Back to Land Program’ over the next 4 years - Engagement of youths in SONGHAI Farms and Pilot Projects. - Granting soft loans to young farmers by creating access to the multi-billion CBN MSME fund and fund from Rivers State Micro-Finance Bank for Rivers youth. - Encouraging Agro-business (Fish Farming, Snail Farming, through training programmes) for youth cooperatives in the 23 LGAs over the next 4 years. <p>YOUTH AND ICT</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICT training and equipment installation in 10 public secondary schools in each of the 23 LGAs, - Capacity building of 50 youths on ICT annually from each local government area (approximately 4,600 youths over 4years) - Introduce coaching and mentorship program in the field of ICT to support young entrepreneurs in the State.
2. Health and Health Promoting Life Style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the National Standards and Minimum Service Package for Adolescents and Youth- Friendly health services in Rivers State. - Introduce Youth-friendly health services in all the type 3/comprehensive PHCs over the next 4 years in the State - Implement the Policy of Primary Health Care Under One Roof in the State by the end of 2020 - Implement the tertiary institutions social health insurance scheme for Rivers youth. - Integrate the primary, secondary and tertiary health care delivery for youth into a comprehensive state-wide network. - Implement the free HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer test and treatment of youths in Rivers state. - Institutionalized the funding of youth health programs in the Ministry of Youth Development - Set up anti- drug campaigns committee and encourage physical education in our secondary schools
3. Participation, Inclusiveness and equitable opportunities for all Youths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an enabling environment for youth development in the 23 local government areas. - Increase and build the capacity of youths for grassroots mobilization and participation. - Mobilize the Youths and encourage political involvement of the youths in the transformation process in Rivers state. - Engage the youths in productive and rewarding activities at the grass root. - Institute a ‘reward scheme’ for exceptional and productive youth in each 23 LGAs. - Encourage the Involvement/participation and integration of physically challenged and vulnerable youths in the governance of the State.
4. Promotive and protective Environment for Youth development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enact and enforce laws that guarantee equal opportunities for all Rivers youth irrespective of physical disability, health status or background. - Domesticate, ratify and implement the conventions of the Rights of the child and women in Rivers State - Make and enforce laws to prohibit all forms of abuse including rape, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, discrimination, and violence on the youth based on gender. - Promote and protect the fundamental human rights of youths of Rivers state. - Encourage the inter-ministerial development of the productive capacities of youths. - Introduce and strengthen school health services in the curriculum of all the secondary schools in the State

<p>5. Partnership-Building Effective Collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Float a “Youth Development and Empowerment Fund” to attend to the development needs of youths in Rivers state. - Institutionalize the establishment of a “State Multi-Sectoral Youth Development Council” (SMYDC) - Establish a framework to promote and strengthen the partnership among youths, non-state agencies and the government in the emancipation process of youths. - To initiate and establish a system of communication interplay between youth and the government of Rivers State. - Create a platform to encourage vulnerable youth education and develop preventive, rehabilitative and reintegration programmes to integrate vulnerable youth.
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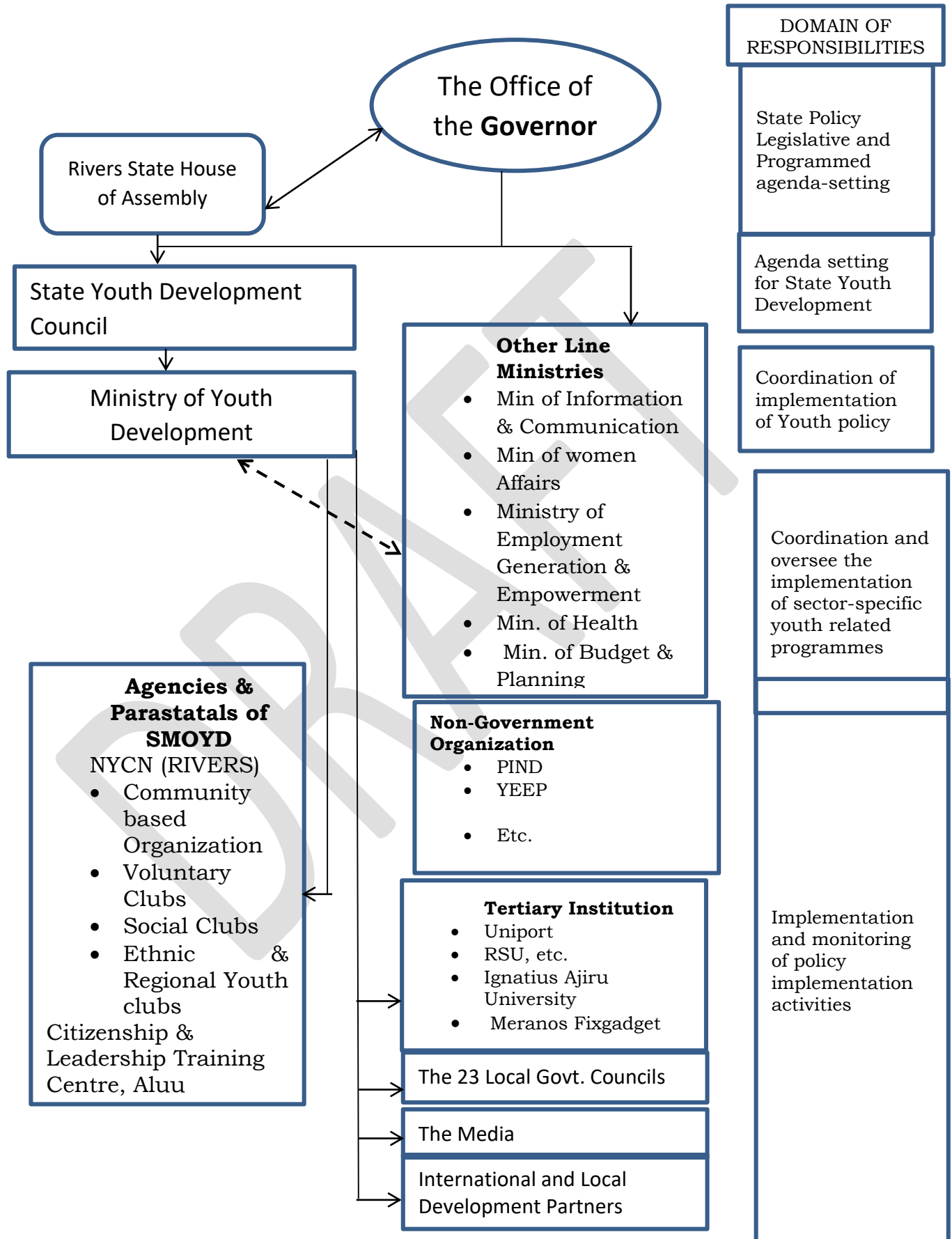
Adopted from NYP (2019)

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

It is an indisputable fact that the implementation of the youth development policy is an activity that brings together ministries, civil societies, non-state agencies and international institutions. The roles, responsibilities, challenges of each arm in the youth development policy implementation process have to be streamlined for proper assessment. It is important to state that these bodies overlap in different areas of the youths’ implementation process. But, it is important to note that all contribute to initiate, facilitate and implement policies, programmes aimed at youth development and empowerment in Rivers state.

Rivers State Ministry of Youth Development is the practical organ for supervision, implementation and oversight of all youth organizations and youth related programs in the State. These organizations are National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) Rivers State and their affiliates, social clubs, youth led, youth focused and ethnic and regional youth organizations including Community-Based Youth Organizations. The Ministry, being the government arm directly responsible for driving and coordinating the implementation of this policy in line with its mandate, partners with other bodies, bilateral and multi-lateral agencies and MDAs to achieve the noble goal of youth development in the state. In the course of doing that, it sets in motion goals and targets that align with the National Youth Policy (2019).

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK:



Adopted from NYP (2019)

6.1 Youth -Related Organizations & Council: Roles and Responsibilities

6.1.1: *The State Youth Development Council (SYDC)*

The State Youth Council is an inter-ministerial council to be chaired by the Deputy Governor of the State. Membership of this council cut across all line Ministries such as Sports, women Affairs, agriculture, budget and planning, Finance, Information and Communication, Education, Social and Rehabilitation, Employment and Empowerment and representative of NYCN in the 23 LGAs. Multi-lateral and Bi-lateral Agencies and multi-nationals' companies operating in the State are also members. The meeting holds quarterly at the instance of the Deputy Governor of the State. Ministry of Youth Development serves as the coordinating Ministry/ secretariat.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. To serve as the highest decision making body for youth development in the State
2. To bring up burning issues with respect to youth development and challenges in the State to limelight for social discuss
3. To provide a forum for cross-fertilization and integration of ideas/ approaches for Youth Development in the State.

6.1.2 State Youth Development Technical Working Group (SYD-TWG)

This group consists of all Key players in youth development: representatives of line ministries, development partners, NYCN (Rivers State), core youth development facilitators in Agriculture, ICT, and other youth friendly innovators. The supervisors of Youth and Sports of the 23 LGAs, a representative from the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports with responsibility for youth Development are also members. The chairman of the SYD-TWG is the Honorable Commissioner of Youth Development. The technical session that will be attended by core youth development experts will be chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth Development. It's a quarterly meeting at the instance of the Honorable commissioner of Youth Development

State Roles and Responsibilities:

1. To monitor and Evaluate the implementation of Youth Development Policy in the State
2. To drive and coordinate youth development efforts in the State and LGAs
3. To define, direct and coordinate the roles of the industry players, the Civil Societies and Non-Governmental Organizations and youth organizations at the State and LGA levels as contained in State Youth Policy

4. Serve as a liaison body between State, LG Councils and other key implementing partners in all youth Development matters in the State.

6.1.3 LGA Youth Development Technical Working Committee

This group shall be composed of the LGA youth development officer, the LGA NYCN Coordinator, leaders of Voluntary youth organizations and community based youth organizations with a representative from the State Ministry of Youth Development. Their role will be to ensure that youth development agenda is brought to the front burner at the local government level. Additionally, the committee is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the State Youth Policy at the local government level.

6.1.4 The National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN)

The NYCN was established in 1964 and in 1990 it got legal recognition and became the umbrella youth body in the country. Has National, Zonal and state chapters. The NYCN is affiliated to the world assembly of youth and African Youth Union. It has its constitution and Board of Trustees with rules and regulations binding its members. The National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), Rivers State is the umbrella youth organization in the country, with national body at Abuja. NYCN partners with the Rivers State Ministries of Youth Development in the development of all youth related programmes and activities. They share ideas, processes and solutions to problems confronting the youths of the state. The MYD should budget and release annual subvention to the NYCN in the State statutorily. Though the MYD has oversight functions on the NYCN, it is not expected to control or interfere in its internal affairs. All voluntary youth organizations and groups are expected to be affiliated to NYCN. In the event that the NYCN that is expected to be nonpartisan, transparent and accountable to the youth of Rivers State derails, the Rivers State Ministry of youth Development shall create an alternative platform that will give a voice to all Rivers youth.

Roles of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (Rivers state).

The NYCN has primary and some secondary roles and responsibilities:

Primary roles and functions:

- a. Registration / Coordination of affiliated youth organizations and member organizations
- b. Supervision/ Oversight role over affiliated or member organizations.
- c. Send periodic report of all nationally recognized voluntary organizations affiliated to NYCN to the MYD.
- d. Serve as a mouth piece for all youth organizations in the state.

Secondary Roles and Responsibilities are:

- a. Mobilize youths for development programs in the state.
- b. Coordinate local, National and international engagement of youths in the State.
- c. Partners with the state ministry of Youth Development in matters on national importance concerning Youth empowerment and development.
- d. Serves as a link between the federal ministry and state ministry of youth development.

6.1.5 Rivers State Youth Parliament (???Rivers State Youth Leaders Assembly)

The RSYP is an affiliate of the Nigeria Youth Parliament which is also an affiliate of the World Youth Parliament. The RSYP is to be supervised by the Ministry of Youth Development. The parliament is a replica of the Rivers State House of Assembly with 32 Members representing the 32 constituencies of the State. The RSYP provides a platform for strengthening and empowering youth to realize their potentials, be productive, self-reliant and compete favorably with youths from other States in all ramifications.

The RSYP aims to:

1. Develop and prepare Rivers youth to participate in the democratic and decision-making processes, especially in matters concerning their well-being and imbibe leadership qualities for governance and entrepreneurship in the State
2. Direct and re-orientate the mindset of the youth for future challenges instead of social vices that may ruin their future
3. Provide opportunities for cross -fertilization of ideas and experiences with youth from other states and regions in the form of peer-review education.

The SYP shall work with the State MYD to introduce youth related bills to the Rivers State House of Assembly in order to contribute to youth development in the State. The SYP, will advocate for full support from the Legislators and adequate funding from the executive arm of Government in the effective implementation of the State Youth policy

6.3 Government Institutions: Roles and Responsibilities

6.3.1 Office of the Deputy Governor:

The office of the Deputy Governor is saddled with the task of taking full responsibility of convening the quarterly State Youth Council Meeting. The aim is to provide much needed political will and commitment in order to oil the process of Youth development in the State. Liaise and bring all key sectors and agencies involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of youth related programmes and activities with the principle of inter-sectorial collaboration. It has to work with a framework and instructional mechanism for implementation of programs of action

by different organizations and agencies. It will further tie youth development to the overall State Development.

6.3.2 The Rivers State Souse of Assembly:

The Rivers State House of Assembly shall provide the needed legal foundation for some critical aspects of the State Youth Policy for it to be passed into law. This will give legal backing to the policy and will in turn make it mandatory for key industry players to partake in the youth development agenda of the Government. The house committee on youth has to introduce “Rivers State Youth Development bill” for deliberation and passage into law. This bill when passed into law will give the much needed legal backing to the State Youth Policy and all youth’s related programs and activities in the state, including “State Youth Development Fund”. Additionally, the House committee on youth should carry out oversight function on the ministry of Youth Development.

6.4 Ministries and Agencies

6.4.1 State Ministry of Youth Development

The State MYD was created in 2008. Its vision, mission and core mandate are stated below:

Ministry Vision:

Develop Rivers youth to achieve their full potentials and be socio-economically responsible citizens as future leaders and become productive assets of the State, irrespective of their background and living in a safe and secure environment that would optimize their contributions to State Development.

Ministry Mission Statement:

To prepare Rivers Youth for present and future challenges in order to render selfless service, responsibility citizenship and effective leadership. These can be achieved by:

1. Adoption and implementation of a comprehensive State Youth Development policy that will enable them to overcome their limitations and contribute to the socio-economic development of the State;
2. Creation of opportunities for Rivers youth to be involved in decision making process in matters that affects them, the environment and society irrespective of their ethnic, religious and socio-economic background;
3. Initiation of youth leadership programs to develop young and talented leaders in various sectors of the economy to serve as role models and mentors for others;
4. Provision of entrepreneurship training to enable the youth to own and run business;

5. Inter-sectorial and multi-sectorial collaboration/Partnership with private sectors and other line ministries to create jobs and income earning opportunities for Rivers youth;
6. Partnership with Civil society Organizations, NGOs, Multi-nationals, bilateral agencies and multi-lateral organizations to train youth on I.C.T, entrepreneurship and value orientation.

Ministry Core mandate:

In summary, the Ministry of Youth Development mobilize, inform, supervise, counsel, educate, and train Rivers youth to be responsible citizens to themselves and to the society for the greater good of the State and country at large by:

1. Coordinating all youth related development matters in the State
2. Coordinating the development and implementation of the state youth policy
3. Responsible for policy formulation and review
4. Design of priority programmes of action, and broad guidelines for youth development in the State
5. Overseeing the implementation of the SYP in the 23 LGAs of the State
6. Coordinating the efforts of other line ministries and the private sector in the implementation of youth development agenda

There are line- Ministries that collaborate with the Ministry of Youth Development to holistically drive the Youth development process in the State. They include but not limited to:

- 6.4.2.** Ministry of Education – responsible for formal and informal education/training of Rivers Youth. The Ministry will relate with other major stakeholder and MDAs in carrying out its responsibilities
- 6.4.3** Ministry of Health—in collaboration with other stakeholders is responsible for the implementation of all health- related issues that affect Rivers youth.
- 6.4.4** Ministry of Women Affairs/Social Development- responsible for the implementation of all issues that relate to young women and girls, and should collaborate with the State Ministry of youth Development
- 6.4.5.** Ministry of Information and Communication-- responsible for the implementation of all issues pertaining to information dissemination to the youth as contained in the policy
- 6.4.6.** Ministry of Finance –responsible for the facilitation of all financial matters/programmes for youth development and seek platforms for generating fund for the “State Youth Development Fund” in the State

6.4.7 Ministry of Budget and Planning---Responsible to show government’s commitment by prioritizing the allocation of more funds to youth programmes in the various relevant MDAs to ensure sustainability

6.4.8 Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development---responsible for the implementation of agricultural programmes that will in turn address the issues of youth unemployment and restiveness empower them with productive future

6.4.9 Ministry of Justice—responsible for articulating the legal framework in the implementation of the SYP.

6.4.10 Ministry of Employment Generation and Empowerment- responsible for partnering with the Youth Ministry for engagement of youths after training and skill acquisition.

6. 4.11 Other MDAs

Also, other MDAs and allied tertiary institutions will play vital roles in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the State Youth Development policy and programs in the State. These offices are:

- (a) Office of the Special Adviser to the Governor on ICT
- (b) The National orientation Agency (NOA) (Rivers state)
- (c) Socio-economic Rights Accountability PROJECT (SERAP)
- (d) Civil Liabilities Organization etc.

6.5 *Youth-led Non-Governmental Organization/Civil Society Organizations/ Other Youth-Focused Organizations:*

Civil Society groups and NGOs are partners of the State Ministry of youth development and their contributions to youth development cannot be over-emphasized. They are important stakeholders in the implementation of the State Youth Policy. In Rivers state, some of the NGOs and civil societies include Community Based Youth Organizations, Faith-based Youth Organizations, Africa Peace Building Network, and Partnership Initiative for Niger Delta (PIND), Center for Gender and Conflict Studies, CLEEN Foundation etc. They also play important role in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation processes.

6.6 *Institutions of Higher Learning/Professional Groups:*

Institutions of Higher learning in the state include the Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, University of Port Harcourt, Ken Sarowiwa Polytechnic and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. Others are Rivers State Colege of Health Science and Technology

Management and Federal College of Technology, Omoku among others. These institutions will play major roles in ensuring that the State Youth Policy is continuously reviewed and relevant to current realities with respect to youth development. Their contributions will immensely add to the implementation and evaluation of youth policies and programmes. They offer platforms for youth education, capacity building, workshops and seminars. These institutions should introduce new programmes and courses in youth work education and training that will lead to the award of Diploma and Degrees, thus encourage youth to engage in youth work as a profession in the State. The State Government should also recognize youth work as a legitimate profession and consider the training, registration and employment of youth workers as cadre in the civil service.

6.7 Students' Union: National Union of Rivers State Students (NURSS)

The NURSS, as a student youth focused voluntary association should serve and provide leadership training opportunities for Rivers Youth. It should empower and enable Rivers youth to actively participate in decision-making processes as it relates to the State and in matters that concerns them as students/future leaders. The union should nurture, galvanize and build our youth to imbibe the principle of accountability, transparency and good governance in order to contribute positively in the overall State Development. The NURSS, which is the umbrella student union of all Rivers indigenes, should have a voice in the decision-making process and policy implementation and evaluation at the State and LGA levels

6.8 International Development Partners: Roles and Responsibilities

These are multilateral and Bilateral Agencies, Foundations and International NGOs such as UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF, UN, Global Fund, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), among others. They will provide technical and financial support to youth development efforts in the State in line with their core mandate in alliance with the State Youth Policy. They are also to partake in the coordination meeting of the State Youth Council and help in the monitoring of on-field activities in relation to their field of operation.

6.9 Multinational companies, IOCs and Major Construction Companies Operating in Rivers State: Roles and Responsibilities

These are the oil and Gas majors, construction giants and oil explorers operating in Rivers State. They include SPDC, Agip, Total-Fina, Elf, Julius Berger, China Construction Company, Setraco, Monier Construction Company (MCC) and NLNG among others. As part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), these companies will provide training, skill acquisition and employment

and empowerment opportunities for Rivers youth in the State and communities they operate from to support the youth development agenda of the State. This support will be coordinated by the Ministry of Youth Development and will to a large extent curb youth restiveness and agitation by youth groups in the State.

6.10 The Media: Roles and Responsibilities

Print and Electronic Media operating in the State are very important stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the State Youth Policy. The Ministry of Youth Development expect the media to serve as vanguard in the gathering and dissemination of information, education and enlightenment of the people on youth development programs and activities and in-turn evaluate the state youth policy implementation using feedback mechanism.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Institutional Framework

7.0 Monitoring and Evaluation System

This encompasses monitoring, evaluation and research is strategic to achieving the objectives of the youth policy, programmes and activities in the State. Without monitoring, the aim of government on youth development will be defeated. The state ministry of youth development is vested with the task of monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation effects all the stages in the policy process. Monitoring will help us track the policy implementation efforts to assess whether the programmes and activities as enunciated in the policy document is executed or progressing as planned.

Evaluation has to be carried out periodically. In Rivers state the youth policy recommends quarterly evaluation of performance of all youth organizations activities and programmes. This means that the roles and programmes of all registered Youth Organizations have to be monitored, evaluated and revalidated. Evaluation process helps to identify the strength and weakness of the policy, MDAs as well as the level of success of each activity and programme aimed at youth development. The M & E process will involve the development of data tools, indicators and means of verifications. This will afford the PRS department of the Ministry to have a data base of all youth development efforts by all stakeholders for purposes of accountability, planning, research and records for evidence –based youth focused programming.

For purposes of timeliness and completeness, data from LGA to State will be reported monthly while data from State to National will be made quarterly using structured standard reporting templates. At the LGA level, a report on the policy implementation will be made to the members of the LGA youth development Technical working committee and same at the State level to the State Youth Development Technical working Group in each of their monthly and quarterly meetings respectively. These reports are expected to be shared amongst all the stakeholders in the youth development industry. A compilation of the quarterly reports 1,2,3 and 4 will be published annually as the” State of Youth Development in Rivers State”- the progress, challenges and recommendations. This will be done as hard and soft/e- copies to all stakeholders. It will also be uploaded in the website of the State Ministry of Youth Development

The annual report will form the basis for researches (operational, implementation and action) and will enable the Ministry carry out survey on State Youth Development Index etc.

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