

Comments on the Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) 2012-2016

We thank you for this opportunity to comment on the IYDS 2012-2016. We hope that our thoughts can positively contribute to the definition of the best possible strategy.

About the mission, vision and objectives of the IYDS

We feel that, for a document that has “holistic” (encompassing all aspects of development of a young person) as one of its standards of practice, the mission, vision and objectives of the IYDS are mainly geared to one specific area of development: the economic one. In 1911 Pr. J.L. Marais wrote: “the battle (...) between humanism and utilitarianism will have to be fought on South Africa soil. (...) But if everything educational is to be regulated by bread and butter, with or without jam, I take it a wider view is necessary”. He wrote this after analysing the works of Grundtvig, a Danish pioneer in adult education when Denmark was a country “slowly sinking into despair through economic as well as political disaster (...) [almost] nationally and economically bankrupt”. In that situation, what he considered as a need was “not technical training, but mental. They need to be taught that they have souls as well as bodies (...) Once they have learnt to use their heads, they will teach themselves to use their fingers”. It might be relevant to consider if and this might apply to South Africa. Much closer to our times, in 1994 the UNESCO published “Our creative diversity”, a document pointing out that “there is a need to transcend economics, without abandoning it. The notion of development itself [has] broadened, as people realized that economic criteria alone could not provide a programme for human dignity and well-being”. We would like to suggest emancipation as an alternative concept that includes yet is not limited to economic freedom and that might serve both humanist and utilitarian endeavours for youth development.

About Standards of Youth Development Practice

We would like to suggest adding shared responsibility as one of the standards. We feel that, in a context of youth apathy and social decay it is important that youth shares responsibility and contributes, in and how they can, in the programmes developed for and with them, in order to foster co-ownership and value for the programmes they are involved in.

About Implementation

One of the guiding values specified in the IYDS is that young people are instruments and agents of their development. To us, this value stresses that young people are subjects and not objects of development. As J. Ki-Zerbo stated, “we do not develop, we develop ourselves”. Following that line of thought, we understand the approach of the IYDS is based in the development of participatory, inclusive and contextualised



development programmes with and for youth. How to make that possible in each of the programmes and projects established in the IYDS is a challenge worth considering. Our proposal is:

- Establish Youth Development Committees that will conduct a participatory needs assessment process in a particular area. Prior training to align aims and processes is required.
- After needs have been prioritised, an integrated youth development program in relevant Key Strategic Focus Areas is defined and implemented for that particular area.

This approach establishes an implementation process that contributes to “real” holistic development and that might help managing some of the risks mentioned in the strategy. It has been proven successful in, e.g. the poorest areas of India.

Thanks again for the opportunity to contribute. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any question or concern about our comments.

Best regards/Cordialment,

Carme Martínez-Roca

Executive Director



www.ifihp.org

+27 (0)79 259 9244

cmr@ifihp.org





International
Foundation for
Interdisciplinary
Health
Promotion

Comments on the IYDS 2012-2016



"Embracing Development for
Sustainable Lifestyles"