

Below are the draft outcome of last week's National Youth Conference held at the University of the South Pacific in Suva.

Noting the Focal Areas: The five broad thematic areas discussed in the Conference are:

1. Inclusion and Access;
2. Economic Social and personal development;
3. Climate Change and Environment;
4. Justice and Law; and
5. Advocacy and Awareness.

Please note that each of these Thematic Areas were divided into sub topics based on youth issues and needs. Specifically, these were aligned to the Ministry's Strategic Goals to ensure linkage and synergy to operations.

The Ministry appreciates submissions from individuals, youth groups, organisations and this closes on Friday 05th April 2019 at 04:00 p.m

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When submitting please do note the outcome number and send in your submissions via email to:

Mr Philip Hereniko: sckmu001@youthandsports.gov.fj

or

Ms Olivia Tawaqa: olivia.tawaqa@youthandsports.gov.fj

Statements

1. We request that Government should work more closely with stakeholders and with rural communities to enforce law and create awareness on the rules of law and Justice. We believe that strengthening collaboration with communities will break the culture of silence, enhance security and create better understanding of human rights and related social issues.
2. We believe that Government should also focus on training youths in parental education as family is an important platform and building block for positive community development.
3. NCD is on the rise in Fiji and we call for Government to do more awareness on NCDs through available Social Media platforms and training in communities to prevent and minimise the implications of NCDs.

4. In order to alleviate poverty, we recommend that Government provide emphasis on Food Security and work with relevant partners such as Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women on the following:
 - a) Design and implement outreach programs to schools, villages and communities
 - b) Encourage home backyard gardening
 - c) Encourage schools to implement gardening programs
5. We believe there is insufficient education on Sign Language in Fiji to create an inclusive environment for those with hearing impairments. We call for a greater accessibility to resources for learning and training to prevent social exclusion of the hearing impaired.
6. We highlight the need for access and inclusion of people with disability in employment and empowerment training and also on infrastructure development.
7. We request that Government provide training in communities on the pros and cons of social media to create a well-informed and educated society.
8. We request that Government strengthen its Research capacity and capabilities and partner with Tertiary Institutions like FNU and USP as well as youths to improve this important area and provide relevant interesting programs for young people.
9. It is interesting to know that almost every young person has knowledge of an incarcerated youth. We believe that Government should be more proactive in its approach towards youth development through the provision of soft skills programs. Similarly, work closely with Corrections Service on their reintegration program to help reduce recidivism.
10. With the understanding that Sports is a Social cohesive mechanism and also an economically viable enterprise, we request Government to increase investment on the development and maintenance of sporting grounds/facilities as well as sports tournaments held at the grass roots level, especially given that such facilities are affected by climate change.

11. In recognizing the invaluable contribution of Sports to Health, Individuals and to the Nation in particular, we request Government to reintroduce the National Sports and Wellness holiday.
12. We call for promotion of ethical behavior from Civil servants and trainings on Good Governance and Leadership Training for young people.
13. With the rapid increase in drugs and substance abuse in Fiji, we recommend that Government consider the provision of more soft skills programs to provide a balance with the hard skills acquired by youths.
14. We call on Government to improve on creating a more efficient and friendly environment for establishing businesses and spaces/hubs for innovation and entrepreneurship development. We want to see government-funded incubators to support growth of SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprises) beyond the initial start-up phase (defined as registering the business).
15. We call on government to provide specific trainings on sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the prevention of Gender-Based Violence so that young people can pursue all their dreams and goals in life with good health

We the participating Youths of the 2019 National Youth and Sports Conference humbly wish to acknowledge the Ministry of Youth and Sports in providing this platform where we could share our issues and have our voices heard.

In addition, the Ministry of Youth and Sports acknowledges the invaluable contributions from respective donors, relevant partners, agencies and youths that have made this conference a success.