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NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

NYDA DISABILITY INCLUSION STRATEGY

2025/2028

OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE



NYDA Disability Inclusion Strategy

2025/2028

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STRATEGY APPROVAL & SIGN-OFF

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Organisation:	NYDA
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APPROVAL BY NYDA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Approved



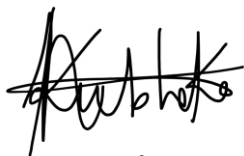
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Comments:

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Mr. Ndumiso Kubheka
NYDA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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MESSAGE BY THE NYDA CEO

As once reflected in the story of Singapore, the idea of being a “nation by design” reminds us that progress does not happen by chance. Nothing we have today, not our growth, our cohesion, or our shared identity, occurs naturally or by accident. It is the result of deliberate thought, planning, and purposeful action. This reflection resonates deeply with us at the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). If we are to build an inclusive and just South Africa, it too must be by design – intentional, deliberate, and sustained. For far too long, youth with disabilities have been marginalised, too often treated as an afterthought or reduced to a box-ticking exercise in programme implementation.

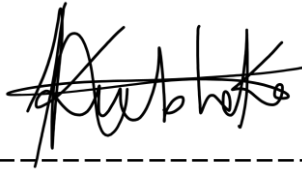


Their exclusion has not been the result of a lack of talent, drive, or potential, but of systems, attitudes, and environments that failed to accommodate them. According to Statistics South Africa’s report Profiling the Socio-Economic Status and Living Arrangements of Persons with Disabilities in South Africa (2011–2022), disability remains closely intertwined with poverty, inequality, and limited access to economic opportunities. The report, based on the 2022 Census, serves as a critical evidence base for policy formulation and programme design aimed at advancing inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

This Disability Inclusion Strategy 2025–2028 represents a turning point in how the NYDA understands and fulfils its mandate. It is a frank acknowledgement that our progress to date has been uneven and that we must do more and do better. The Agency now moves from good intentions to SMART action, ensuring that disability inclusion is not a peripheral activity but a core principle that guides every policy, programme, and partnership. Through this strategy, the NYDA commits to a designed future – one where every branch, service, and intervention is accessible and inclusive; where young people with disabilities are active participants in the economy, not passive beneficiaries of charity or social grants; and where our internal systems reflect the diversity we seek to promote nationally.

We recognise that true inclusion requires more than compliance – it demands

transformation. It requires us to invest in infrastructure, training, data, and partnerships that are fit for purpose. It requires listening to and working with youth with disabilities, not simply for them. As we implement this three-year plan, we do so with a renewed sense of urgency and accountability. The NYDA will measure its success not by the number of policies written but by the number of young people with disabilities who can say their lives have tangibly improved because of our work and advocacy. This strategy is therefore both a commitment and a call to action. Together—government, business, civil society, and youth—we can ensure that inclusion is no longer a matter of chance, but of design.



Mr Ndumiso Kubheka

Chief Executive Officer of the NYDA Board

MESSAGE BY THE NYDA BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE TRANSFORMATION CHAIRPERSON

Since the start of the 7th Administration in 2025, the NYDA has been making reasonable efforts to engage in youth development across different economic sectors, especially in the disability sector.

The NYDA is setting a new standard for youth empowerment by supporting persons with disability across all provinces.



The NYDA is aligned with the broader National Disability Rights Strategy, which emphasises deliberate inclusion across all programs.

The following objectives for inclusivity will be implemented:

- Ensure all NYDA programmes (e.g., grants, mentorship, NYS, entrepreneurship training) are designed and delivered to be fully accessible.
- Review and adapt application processes to ensure they are barrier-free.
- Train programme staff on inclusive support and accommodations.

The NYDA will ensure that all offices are compliant in relation to accessibility and ablution facilities for all stakeholders with disabilities. Our internal audit, as well as occupational health and safety units, monitors this regularly to ensure compliance. The organisation will invest in continuous training of staff to ensure that no young person or stakeholder is left out due to barriers related to communication and resources. Although the APP shows relatively low disability set-aside targets, the NYDA attributes this to historical underrepresentation and the lack of tailored pipeline support.

These gaps are being addressed through new disability-specific programming, dedicated branch-level support officers, and heightened community outreach. The agency has also developed measurable inclusion indicators across all programmes. These include disability quotas in training, grants, recruitment, and participation in the

National Youth Service, all of which will be monitored through the revised Disability Strategy.

It must be emphasised that issues of gender, ethnic groups and disability can never be limited to a particular percentage but must be enforced to find expression in all the work that the NYDA does. We urge all staff and management to support the implementation of this strategy in order to support persons with disabilities.



Mr Sibusiso Makathini

NYDA Board Member Sub-Committee Transformation

STATEMENT BY THE NYDA DEPUTY EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

The NYDA's Disability Strategy is to ensure full integration of persons with disabilities across all institutional programmes. The strategy emphasises inclusion, equal participation, and access to economic opportunities. The interventions seek to translate these commitments into action through three interlinked operational pillars: Skills Development, Economic Transformation, and Investments and Partnerships.



This approach addresses the NYDA's previous siloed efforts by advancing an intersectional model that embeds disability inclusion across all programme areas.

Skills Development:

- The NYDA will promote tailored training initiatives, such as accredited work-readiness programmes, entrepreneurial development, and caregiver certification to equip youth with disabilities with market-relevant skills.

Economic Transformation:

- Focus on translating these skills into tangible outcomes by ensuring that youth with disabilities have equitable access to funding instruments, enterprise development support, and employment pathways.

Investments and Partnerships:

- Anchors collaboration with government, the private sector, and civil society to unlock capital, mobilise mentorship, and facilitate joint programmes that create sustained impact.

By coordinating with organisations such as the Road Accident Fund (RAF), Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and youth-led disability organisations, the NYDA can deliver accredited programmes while achieving measurable employment and entrepreneurship outcomes aligned with national development priorities.

Through such integrated and results-driven interventions, the NYDA can position itself as a national leader in disability-inclusive youth development, one that not only provides

access but also fosters independence, innovation, and sustainable economic participation for youth with disabilities across South Africa.



Mr Bonga Makhanya

Deputy Executive Chairperson of the NYDA Board

FOREWORD STATEMENT BY THE NYDA EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) exists to address the unique challenges confronting South Africa's youth and to empower them as active participants in national development. Established as a catalyst for coordinated and integrated youth development, the Agency is mandated to mainstream youth empowerment initiatives across all sectors of society, ensuring that young people are equipped with the opportunities, skills, and support necessary to realise their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the country's social and economic transformation. Research indicates that between 5% and 12% of South Africans live with moderate to severe disabilities.



Despite this significant proportion, access to services, opportunities, and spaces for equal participation in society remains severely limited. This persistent exclusion underscores the urgent need for systemic change to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy full social, economic, and political inclusion. Across the world, persons with disabilities are increasingly organising, mobilising, and asserting their fundamental rights, challenging societies to confront exclusion and inequity. In recognition of these global movements, the UN has developed key policy instruments that address the rights and concerns of persons with disabilities, notwithstanding the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. These frameworks reaffirm the principle that disability inclusion is a matter of human rights, social justice, and development, not charity or benevolence.

The current administration has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to building a just, inclusive, and caring society that leaves no one behind. In line with this vision, disability inclusion has been elevated as a national priority, recognising that the strength of our democracy lies in how we empower and protect its most marginalised citizens. This strategy therefore aligns with the government's broader objective of advancing social cohesion, equality of opportunity, and the full participation of persons with disabilities in every sphere of public life. The concept of a caring and inclusive society is strengthened when we recognise that persons with disabilities are entitled to the same rights, dignity,

and opportunities as every other citizen. True transformation requires that we move beyond perceptions of disability as a condition deserving of pity, and instead affirm persons with disabilities as capable, resourceful, and integral contributors to South Africa's development.

For the first time in its history, the NYDA Board includes a member who is a person with a disability, Mr Sibusiso Makhathini. His appointment represents more than inclusion; it is a milestone in the Agency's journey toward representation, accessibility, and lived-experience leadership. Mr Makhathini's presence on the Board brings a critical perspective to decision-making processes and ensures that issues affecting young persons with disabilities are not spoken about in abstraction, but are advocated for and guided by experience, empathy, and insight. His contribution symbolises the Agency's evolving commitment to ensuring that disability inclusion is not peripheral, but central to the NYDA's governance and strategic agenda. As a nation, and as an institution committed to youth empowerment, we have a collective responsibility to advance the quality of life and participation of young people with disabilities in all spheres of society.

The NYDA, through the establishment of the Board Sub-Committee on Transformation, reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the upliftment, inclusion, and advancement of persons with disabilities — both within the organisation and across the broader youth development landscape. This strategic focus reflects our belief that transformation must be practical, participatory, and centred on restoring dignity to all young people, regardless of ability. Finally, I wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the many individuals, organisations, and partners who have contributed to the development of this strategy. Your insights, expertise, and commitment have been invaluable in shaping a framework that truly reflects the aspirations and lived realities of young persons with disabilities.

The NYDA Board and Management remain steadfast in their collective commitment to the full and effective implementation of this strategy. Together, we will ensure that young people, particularly those living with disabilities, are meaningfully included, supported, and empowered in every aspect of the Agency's work. This strategy is not merely a document; it is a pledge to action, partnership, and transformation.



Dr Sunshine Myende

Executive Chairperson of the NYDA Board

ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
APP	Annual Performance Plan
CEE	Commission for Employment Equity
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DEAFSA	Deaf Federation of South Africa
DPSA	Disabled People South Africa
DWYPD	Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
DYSA	Disabled Youth South Africa
EEA	Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998)
EXCO	Executive Committee
HEDSA	Higher Education Disability Services Association
INDS	Integrated National Disability Strategy
MELR	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Reporting
NCPD	National Council of & for Persons with Disabilities
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy (2020-2030)
OPD	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
PEPUDA	Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act
PDDD	Programme Design, Development & Delivery
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RA	Reasonable Accommodation
SANCB	South African National Council for the Blind
SASL	South African Sign Language
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Term	Definition
Accessibility	The degree to which an environment, service, product, or facility can be accessed and used by all people, including persons with disabilities. This encompasses physical accessibility (buildings, transport), digital accessibility (websites, software), and communication accessibility (information in accessible formats).
Assistive Devices and Technology	Any item, equipment, or software system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities (e.g., wheelchairs, hearing aids, screen readers and magnifiers, communication boards).
Data Disaggregation	The process of breaking down collected data into specific categories or variables to reveal patterns, inequalities and levels of participation among different groups. In this strategy, data disaggregation refers to analysing information about youth with disabilities according to various factors, including type of disability, gender, age, geographic location, education level, socio-economic background, and accessibility needs.
Disability	Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in

	society on an equal basis with others. (UNCRPD). The NYDA adopts this definition of the social and human rights model.
Discrimination on the basis of Disability	Any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
Dual-Target Framework	A strategic approach setting both minimum targets (achievable, mandatory outcomes) and stretch targets (aspirational goals) to ensure accountability while driving maximum performance.
Intersectionality	A concept that describes how different forms of social identity, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, and others, intersect and interact to create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.
Mainstreaming	The integration of disability inclusion into all aspects of an organisation's policy, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes - rather than addressing it through separate, standalone projects.
Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)	Organisations that are led, directed, and governed by persons with disabilities (e.g., Disabled Youth South Africa - DYSA).

Reasonable Accommodation	Necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments that do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the NYDA, to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy and exercise all rights on an equal basis with others. Examples include providing a sign language interpreter, modifying a workstation, providing assistive technology, and providing materials in an alternative format.
Self-Representation	Youth disabilities must be central in all decision-making processes that affect them, ensuring meaningful participation and leadership at every level, entrenching the slogan of “Nothing About Us Without Us”.
Universal Design	The design of products, environments, programmes, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design principles benefit everyone, not only persons with disabilities.
Youth with Disabilities	For the purposes of this strategy, this term refers to individuals between the ages of 14 and 35, as defined by the NYDA, who have a disability as defined in Appendix D.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mandate and Strategic Imperative

This Disability Inclusion and Accessibility Strategy operationalises the National Youth Development Agency's (NYDA) legislative mandate, derived from the amended NYDA Act 2024, which explicitly charges the Agency to promote the interests of the youth, "particularly young people with disabilities." It represents a fundamental commitment to transforming this mandate from a clause in an Act into a tangible reality for over 2.4% of South Africa's youth population who live with disabilities. This strategy is the primary vehicle through which the NYDA will fulfil the specific mandate clause relating to youth with disabilities. It ensures that inclusivity is not a standalone project but is woven into the fabric of every programme, service, and operation of the Agency, from grant-making and entrepreneurship support to skills development and national service.

Grounded in the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2015) and the Integrated National Disability Strategy (1997), the NYDA affirms that youth with disabilities are rights holders, leaders, innovators and contributors to the South African youth development agenda. In addition, the NYDA recognises that gender, race, geography, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation intersect to produce compounded exclusion.

The strategy, therefore, seeks to translate rights into action, ensuring that disability inclusion is not a standalone project, but a core development imperative integrated into every NYDA program from entrepreneurship and employment to education and national service.

By embedding a human rights approach, NYDA commits to creating enabling environments, dismantling attitudinal and structural barriers, and advancing equality, dignity, and full participation for youth with disabilities, in line with South Africa's constitutional and international obligations.

Three Interlinked Operational Pillars: Skills Development, Economic Transformation, and Investments and Partnerships

This approach addresses the NYDA's previous siloed efforts by advancing an intersectionality that embeds disability inclusion across all programme areas.

I. Under the Skills Development Pillar

The NYDA will promote tailored training initiatives, such as accredited work-readiness programmes, entrepreneurial development, and caregiver certification to equip youth with disabilities with market-relevant skills.

II. Economic Transformation

Focus on translating these skills into tangible outcomes by ensuring that youth with disabilities have equitable access to funding instruments, enterprise development support, and employment pathways.

III. Investments and Partnerships

Anchors collaboration with government, the private sector, and civil society to unlock capital, mobilise mentorship, and facilitate joint programmes that create sustained impact.

Dual-Target Framework: Ensuring Delivery and Driving Ambition

This strategy adopts a sophisticated dual-target framework to balance accountable delivery with transformative ambition. We commit to minimum achievable targets as our baseline accountability, with stretch targets to drive maximum effort and innovation.

- Core 3-Year Minimum Targets (Accountability Floor):
 - Place a targeted number of youth with disabilities in jobs.
 - Provide business support to a targeted number of youth-owned enterprises.
 - Equip a targeted number of youth with job market skills.
 - Achieve staff representation of persons with disabilities in line with equity goals.
 - Ensure a targeted percentage of procurement spend on PWD-owned enterprises.
- Aspirational Stretch Targets (Excellence Goals):
 - Exceed job placement targets
 - Exceed business support targets
 - Exceed skills development targets
 - Be recognised as a model employer
 - Exceed procurement spend targets

(Detailed numerical targets are provided in the Logical Framework, Section 5.2, and Appendix B)

Enhanced Implementation Architecture

The strategy establishes robust implementation mechanisms:

- Disability Inclusion support across all 43 NYDA branches
- Minimum 4% participation rate of youth with disabilities across all NYDA programmes

- Talent Database for tracking qualified youth and facilitating placements
- Accessibility Fund for assistive technology supporting entrepreneurs
- Minimum 3% employment for youth with disabilities across all NYDA
- PWD's Acquisition Plan 2025

Five-Pillar Strategic Framework

The strategy is structured around five interconnected strategic pillars:

- Pillar 1: An Inclusive & Accessible NYDA: Transform the NYDA into a model employer and service provider.
- Pillar 2: Economic Empowerment & Entrepreneurship: Drive economic inclusion through targeted funding and procurement.
- Pillar 3: Skills Development & Employability: Enhance skills development and job placement through accessible programmes.
- Pillar 4: Advocacy, Partnerships & Engagement: Strengthen partnerships with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).
- Pillar 5: Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning: Implement robust systems for evidence-based decision-making.

Phased Implementation Approach

The strategy will be implemented through a structured three-year phased approach:

- 2025/26: Foundation Phase
 - Establishing systems, building capacity, and achieving 30% of

minimum targets.

- 2026/27: Scale-Up Phase
 - Expanding programmes, optimising systems, and achieving 70% of minimum targets.
- 2027/28: Consolidation Phase
 - Exceeding minimum targets, pursuing stretch goals, and evaluating impact.

Commitment to Partnership and Accountability

Guided by the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us," the NYDA commits to working hand-in-hand with youth with disabilities and their representative organisations. The strategy includes comprehensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks with quarterly reporting to the NYDA Board and annual public accountability reports.

This strategy represents NYDA's unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive environment where youth with disabilities can fully participate in South Africa's economy. We will systematically remove barriers and create meaningful opportunities for all young people through these concrete targets and implementation mechanisms.



1. IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: SIX-MONTH QUICK WINS (JANUARY–JUNE 2026)

To build immediate momentum and demonstrate the NYDA's commitment prior to the formal commencement of the strategy's Foundation Phase, the following high-visibility, rapidly implementable initiatives will be executed.

#	Quick Win Initiative	Description	Key Deliverables	Target Date	Responsible Division
1	Accessibility "Quick Audit" & Fixes	Conduct rapid accessibility assessments of the NYDA HQ and the five highest-traffic branches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on 3 key physical & 3 key digital barriers. Immediate implementation of 5 low-cost, high-impact fixes (e.g., ramp installation, website form corrections). 	March 2026	Facilities, IT
2	Launch of Accessible Communications Protocol	Mandate and implement immediate changes to all new external communications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new social media graphics include alt-text. All new public documents released in accessible PDF. SASL interpreters booked for the next two major public events. 	February 2026	Communications
3	"Disability Confidence" Starter Training	Roll out a compulsory 3-hour virtual training session for all NYDA staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of all staff complete training. Pre- and post-training confidence surveys show a 25% improvement in understanding. 	April 2026	HR, CSP Unit
4	Sign First OPD MoU with Organisations within the sector	Formalise the partnership with the primary representative body for youth with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed MoU with disability organisations within the sector. Joint press release announcing the partnership. 	May 2026	Partnerships

5	Establish and Launch the Talent Database (Pilot Phase)	Develop and soft launch the centralised database for youth with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional database platform. • Pilot registration of 200 youth with disabilities from existing NYDA programmes. 	June 2026	IT, PDDD
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2. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND FRAMEWORK

This strategy is grounded in and shall be implemented in compliance with the following frameworks:

2.1. Constitutional Mandate

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), particularly:

- Section 9: The Equality Clause, prohibiting unfair discrimination on grounds of disability.
- Section 10: The right to have inherent dignity respected and protected.
- Bill of Rights: Encompassing the rights to education, healthcare, and access to information.

2.2. National Legislation

- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act No. 4 of 2000): Provides for the prevention of unfair discrimination and the promotion of equality.
- Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998): Promotes equitable representation in the workplace and prohibits unfair discrimination.
- National Youth Development Agency Act, 2008 (Act No. 54 of 2008): The NYDA's founding mandate, specifically Section 3(i), prioritising youth with disabilities.

2.3. White Papers and National Policies

- White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD), 2016:

Provides the government's strategic framework for realising the rights of persons with disabilities.

- Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS), 1997: The foundational national strategy for the mainstreaming of disability.
- National Development Plan (NDP) 2030: Highlights the need to improve access to education and employment for persons with disabilities.
- National Youth Policy (NYP) 2030: Emphasises non-discrimination and the inclusion of youth with disabilities.

2.4. National Strategic Frameworks on Disability Rights

- National Strategic Framework on Universal Design and Access (2021): Gazette No. 45328. Provides the national blueprint for the design of accessible environments, products, and services, directly informing the accessibility commitments in Pillars 1, 2, and 3.
- National Strategic Framework on Reasonable Accommodation and Support for Persons with Disabilities (2021): Gazette No. 45328. Establishes the national standards and procedures for providing reasonable accommodation, forming the basis for our internal HR policies in Pillar 1 and service delivery across all programmes.
- National Strategic Framework on Awareness Raising on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022): Gazette No. 47373. Guides our advocacy and communication efforts in Pillar 4 to challenge stereotypes and promote a culture of inclusion.
- From Policy to Action: Institutionalising Self-Representation for Persons with Disabilities (2024): Gazette No. 51352. Codifies the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us," mandating the active involvement of

youth with disabilities and their representative organisations (OPDs) in all decision-making processes, as reflected in our Guiding Principles and Pillar 4.

2.5. International Instruments

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006: Ratified by South Africa, it is the leading international instrument guiding disability inclusion.

2.6. NYDA Internal Policies

- NYDA Human Resources Policies: Including Recruitment, Selection, and Wellness policies.
- Leave Policy
- Employee Safety and wellness policy
- Policy on working Remotely
- Bursary policy
- Employment Equity Plan (2025-2030)

3. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

3.1. National Profile of Youth with Disabilities

Youth with disabilities in South Africa face intersecting challenges that create cycles of exclusion and poverty. They experience significantly higher rates of unemployment, lower educational attainment, and greater vulnerability to poverty than their non-disabled peers. Geographic isolation, particularly in

rural areas, compounds these challenges through limited access to support services, assistive devices, and economic opportunities. This exclusion represents both a violation of fundamental rights and a substantial loss of human potential for the nation's development.

3.2. NYDA's Progress and Baseline (2022–2024)

Building on the foundational 2022 Disability Strategy, the NYDA has made tangible, though nascent, progress:

- **Institutional Capacity:** Training of dedicated Disability Inclusion Units in each branch represents a significant investment in implementation infrastructure.
- **Financial Commitment:** Allocation of budgets for accessibility and achievement of 5% procurement spend on enterprises owned by youth with disabilities in the 2023/24 financial year demonstrates a commitment to resourcing inclusion.
- **Programme Integration:** The inclusion of youth with disabilities in Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) projects and the establishment of specific quantitative targets for programmes are positive steps toward mainstreaming.
- **Gaps:** Initiatives have often been siloed rather than fully integrated into the NYDA's core programming. Application processes for grants and programmes remain largely inaccessible, and data collection on participation rates is inconsistent. The absence of fully-resourced Disability Inclusion support at all branches has limited local implementation capacity.

3.3. Key Challenges and Barriers

- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Stigma, stereotyping, and low expectations from society, families, and employers continue to limit opportunities.
- **Physical and Environmental Barriers:** Inaccessible NYDA offices, public transport, and general infrastructure prevent participation.
- **Communication Barriers:** Information is frequently unavailable in accessible formats (Braille, digital, easy-read, South African Sign Language).
- **Systemic Barriers:** Complex application processes, lack of reasonable accommodation procedures, and inadequate data collection systems perpetuate exclusion.

3.4. Opportunities for Transformative Inclusion

- **Leveraging Technology:** Digital platforms can enable accessible service delivery, including e-learning and online applications. Zero-rating the NYDA website will remove a critical cost barrier.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Formalising relationships with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) for co-design and implementation.
- **Economic Power:** Using the NYDA's grant-making and procurement power to drive market-based inclusion.
- **Youth Leadership:** Engaging youth with disabilities not as beneficiaries but as advisors, leaders, and implementers within NYDA programmes.

3.5. Lessons Learned from Previous Implementation

Past efforts have shown that successful inclusion requires:

- **Dedicated Leadership:** A senior champion and designated inclusion units are essential.
- **Ring-fenced Resources:** Specific budgets are required; inclusion cannot be an unfunded mandate.
- **"Nothing About Us Without Us":** Programmes designed without the input of OPDs are less effective.
- **Accessibility from the Start:** Retrofitting accessibility is more costly and less effective than building it into the design from the beginning.

4. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

4.1. Vision Statement

A conscious, capable, and opportunity-driven youth population, inclusive of youth with disabilities, that contributes to South Africa's development.

4.2. Mission Statement

To provide a coordinated and integrated approach to youth development, focused on systematically removing barriers and implementing targeted interventions that empower youth with disabilities through entrepreneurship, skills development, employment, and advocacy, in line with the social and human rights model of disability.

4.3. Guiding Principles

- **A “Society for All”:** The needs of all youth constitute the basis for NYDA's planning and policy.
- **Self-Representation (“Nothing About Us Without Us”):** Persons with disabilities, including youth, have the right to speak and participate on their own behalf in all decisions that affect them. This ensures that persons with disabilities are not represented solely by service providers, parents, or professionals, but are recognised as rights holders and decision makers aligned with the UNCRPD and the principle of “nothing about us without us”.
- **Integration and Mainstreaming:** Disability issues must be integrated into all NYDA strategies, planning, and programmes, not treated as a separate add-on.
- **Linguistic Accessibility and Cultural Inclusion: The NYDA recognises** South African Sign Language (SASL) as an official language and a cornerstone of accessible communication. All internal and external engagements must promote linguistic inclusion for deaf and hard-of-hearing youth. SASL will be mainstreamed across the NYPD and in all communication, training, and advocacy platforms.
- **Human Rights and Development:** Disability is a human rights issue, not a welfare issue. Focus is on removing societal barriers, not “fixing” individuals.
- **Accessibility:** The creation of environments, programmes, and services usable by all people to the greatest extent possible.
- **Dual-Accountability:** Commitment to both achievable minimum targets and aspirational stretch goals.

4.4. Intersectionality Themes

- **Rural Inclusion:** Prioritising youth with disabilities in underserved rural and township areas, who often face compounded barriers due to geographic isolation and a lack of services.
- **Gender Sensitivity:** Addressing the specific and often heightened challenges faced by young women with disabilities, including greater vulnerability to discrimination and violence.
- **LGBTQIA+ Inclusion:** Acknowledging and proactively addressing the unique discrimination and barriers faced by youth with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+. Programmes and support services will be designed to be safe, affirming, and responsive to their specific needs, recognising the intersection of ableism and homophobia/transphobia.
- **Youth Leadership:** Promoting the active participation of youth with disabilities in programme design, implementation, and monitoring, ensuring their voices are central to the interventions that affect them.



5. STRATEGIC PILLARS, OUTCOMES, AND KEY FOCUS AREAS

This strategy is organised around five interconnected pillars for the 3-year period:

5.1. Pillar 1: An Inclusive and Accessible NYDA

- **3-Year Outcomes:**

- Achieve staff representation of persons with disabilities in line with national equity goals; ensure 100% of branches have functioning Disability Inclusion Units.
- Stretch: Higher % staff representation aligned with 7% by 2030 (NDP target); NYDA recognised as model employer.

- **Key Focus Areas:**

- **Workplace Equity:** Implement proactive recruitment and retention strategies, including targeted outreach and guaranteed interview schemes.
- Amend NYDA recruitment and HR policies to align with the long-term national aspiration of 7% representation.
- **Disability Inclusion Support:** Build fully-resourced Disability Inclusion capacity in all 43 NYDA branches to champion local implementation.
- **Reasonable Accommodation:** Streamline processes for providing accommodation for staff and clients.
- **Physical and Digital Accessibility:** Achieve 100% compliance with accessibility standards across all branches and digital platforms, including zero-rating the NYDA website and online portals to remove data cost barriers. All upgrades, new procurements, and communications will adhere to the technical standards and guidelines detailed in Appendix A: Accessibility Implementation

Guidelines.

- **HR Policy Integration & Staff Development:** Formalise and implement robust internal policies to recruit, retain, and develop staff with disabilities.
 - **Recruitment Procedures:** Implement a detailed recruitment process for persons with disabilities, including a 3% employment equity scoring bonus during shortlisting, mandatory use of a confidential Disability Disclosure Form (EEA1), and guaranteed access to a support person during interviews. Questions about a candidate's disability during the interview process are prohibited.
 - **Staff Development & Retention:** Establish targeted staff development programs, including a minimum of 2-4 interns with disabilities per division annually, dedicated career progression planning, and access to shadowing opportunities, mentoring, and coaching.
 - **Onboarding:** Ensure orientation and induction programmes are fully accessible and accommodating for new employees with disabilities.
- **Grievance Procedures & Employee Support:** Establish clear, confidential, and safe mechanisms for employees to raise concerns.
 - Implement formal grievance procedures specifically addressing unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability, with anti-victimisation protections for complainants.
 - Provide accessible emotional and psychological support services for all employees, with specific consideration for

employees with disabilities.

5.2. Pillar 2: Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

- **3-Year Outcome:**

- Minimum: Achieve the targeted number of youth-supported businesses; meet the procurement spend target for enterprises owned by persons with disabilities; reach the targeted number of entrepreneurship trainees.
- Stretch: Exceed business support, procurement, and trainee targets.

- **Key Focus Areas:**

- **Targeted Funding:** Ring-fence funding for entrepreneurs with disabilities, with priority for rural and township youth.
- **Accessibility Fund:** Establish a dedicated fund for assistive technologies that enable business participation.
- **Market Access:** Enhance procurement opportunities and market linkages for businesses owned by persons with disabilities.
- Explicit lobbying for a 7% procurement set-aside aligned with national disability equity frameworks.
- Market access through inclusive supply chains and CSI programmes.
- 4% Participation Benchmark: Ensure minimum participation rate across all NYDA economic programmes.
- Leverage NYDA's funding power for Private Sector accountability: Recognising the limited accountability of the private sector on youth disability inclusion, the NYDA will use its role as a funder and partner to advocate for change. For businesses and enterprises that receive NYDA funding with a significant commercial return or that are key partners in economic development programs, the NYDA will introduce

inclusion criteria. This will include encouraging or requiring these partners to set and report on targets for the inclusion of youth with disabilities as employees, entrepreneurs within their supply chains, and beneficiaries of their Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programs. This approach positions persons with disabilities as valuable partners and contributors to the economy, not merely as beneficiaries.

5.3. Pillar 3: Skills Development and Employability

- **3-Year Outcome:**

- Minimum: Achieve the targeted number of job placements and youth equipped with job skills; ensure the Talent Database is fully operational.
- Stretch: Exceed job placement and skills development targets.

- **Key Focus Areas:**

- **Inclusive Learning:** Ensure all training materials and programmes are fully accessible. Deliver targeted life skills and entrepreneurship workshops specifically for youth with disabilities to address unique barriers and build peer networks.

- **Talent Database:** Create a centralised system for tracking youth with disabilities who have completed SETA requirements.
- **Employment Pathways:** Strengthen partnerships with employers for job placements and internships. Leverage and ensure inclusion in key government initiatives such as the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI), the Pathway Management Network, the Community Work Programme (CWP), and the National Youth Service (NYS).
- **NYS Inclusion:** Implement disability inclusion quotas in the National Youth Service programme.

5.4. Pillar 4: Advocacy, Partnerships, and Stakeholder Engagement

- **3-Year Outcome:**

- Minimum: Establish formal partnerships with key OPDs and ensure the Active External Advisory Forum is operational.
- Stretch: NYDA is recognised as a national leader in disability inclusion advocacy.

- **Key Focus Areas:**

- **Strategic MoUs:** Formalise partnerships with key OPDs
- **Advisory Structures:** Establish and regularly convene an External Disability Advisory Forum.
- **Sector Collaboration:** Partner with the Department of Basic Education for early intervention in special schools.
- **Implementation of PWD's Acquisition Plan**
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch a targeted number of initiatives per annum to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusion, as outlined in the Annual Disability Awareness Calendar (refer to Section 10.4).

5.5. Pillar 5: Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Reporting (MELR)

- **3-Year Outcome:**

- Minimum: Publish annual public reports and maintain a functional data collection system.
- Stretch: Implement a real-time performance dashboard and be benchmarked as a best-practice organisation.

- **Key Focus Areas:**

- Data Disaggregation: Implement a system for collecting disability-disaggregated data across all programmes. This data will include the type of disability, gender, age, geographic area, education status, and accessibility needs.
- Dual-Target Tracking: Monitor progress against both minimum and stretch targets.
- Development of a “Rural Disability Inclusion” Data Collection Strategy: Acknowledge that standard data collection methods will fail to capture the true number and needs of youth with disabilities in remote areas.
- Capturing an accurate reflection of the number of youth with disabilities in these areas will be a costly endeavour requiring additional, dedicated funding. This investment is essential to build the necessary infrastructure for data collection, which includes funding for specialised outreach teams, accessible mobile technology, and partnerships with local community structures to establish a credible baseline. This strategy must be proactive and adequately funded.
- Research: Document lessons learned and best practices for

continuous improvement.

- Transparent Reporting: Publish annual progress reports and facilitate independent evaluations.

6. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

6.1. Phased Approach: Foundation, Scale-Up, and Consolidation

Year 1 (2026) – Foundation Phase:

- Focus on establishing systems, building capacity, and achieving 30% of minimum targets.
- Key activities: Appoint Disability Inclusion champions in all branches, conduct accessibility audits, and develop systems.
- Success indicator: All foundational systems are operational and initial targets are on track.

Year 2 (2027) – Scale-Up Phase:

- Expand successful initiatives, optimise systems, and achieve 70% of minimum targets.
- Key activities: Scale programmes, enhance partnerships, and begin stretch target initiatives.
- Success indicator: Consistent progress across all pillars and targets.

Year 3 (2028) – Consolidation Phase:

- Exceed minimum targets, pursue stretch goals, and evaluate impact.
- Key activities: Impact assessment, strategy review, knowledge transfer.
- Success indicator: Minimum targets exceeded and stretch targets within reach.

6.2. Three-Year Logical Framework with Dual Targets

Strategic Pillar	Key Activities	Minimum Target (2028)	Stretch Target (2028)	Responsible Division
Pillar 1	Building Disability Inclusion Support in all branches	Disability Inclusion support in all 43 branches is operational	Model employer recognition	HR / Facilities
Pillar 2	Provide business support	350 businesses	500 businesses	PDDD
Pillar 3	Job placements	700 placements	1,000 placements	PDDD
Pillar 4	Formal partnerships	3 OPD MoUs	5 OPD MoUs	Partnerships
Pillar 5	Reporting system	Annual reports	Real-time dashboard	M&E

All values are estimates. Refer to Appendix B for detailed quarterly activities, milestones, and budget allocations

6.3. Key Enablers and Critical Success Factors

- Leadership Commitment: Active championing by the NYDA Board, CEO and Management.
- Adequate Resourcing: Ring-fenced budgeting for disability inclusion.
- Partnership Approach: Genuine collaboration with OPDs and other stakeholders.
- Adaptive Management: Flexibility to adjust strategies based on implementation experience.



7. RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

7.1. NYDA Core Budget Allocation

A minimum budget of R6 million for operational costs and R2 million will be ring-fenced annually for disability-specific initiatives and reasonable accommodation over the 3-year period.

7.2. Divisional Budgeting Requirements

All divisions (Programme Design, Development & Delivery, Communications, Human Resources, Finance, Supply Chain Management, etc.) will include specific, costed line items for disability mainstreaming in their annual performance plans. This ensures ownership and accountability across the organisation.

7.3. Partner Funding and Co-Financing

The NYDA will actively seek co-funding partnerships with other SETAs, the National Skills Fund, and the private sector to amplify the impact of specific initiatives within this strategy, particularly for large-scale skills programmes and entrepreneurship funds.

7.4. Three-Year High-Level Budget Estimate

A detailed budget will be developed as part of the annual planning process. A high-level estimate for Pillar-specific activities is approximately R6 million over three years, with Year 1 focused on system establishment (R2 million), Year 2 on scaling (R2 million), and Year 3 on consolidation (R2 million).

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1. Risk Identification

Risk Description	Category	Probability	Impact	Risk Level
Insufficient budget allocation	Financial	Medium	High	High
Resistance to change / attitudinal barriers	Organisational	High	Medium	High
Inadequate data collection systems	Operational	Medium	Medium	Medium
Programmes not accessible, leading to low uptake	Operational	Medium	High	Medium
Partnership challenges with OPDs	Operational	Low	High	Medium

8.2. Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies

Risk	Mitigation Strategy (2026–2028)
Insufficient budget allocation	Advocate for ring-fenced budgeting in the annual MTEF process; seek alternative funding through partnerships; re-prioritise internal funds.
Resistance to change / attitudinal barriers	Ongoing mandatory staff training; strong, visible leadership from the CEO and EXCO; celebrate and communicate quick wins.
Inadequate data collection systems	Invest in and mandate the use of the new MELR data collection system from Day 1; simplify reporting for branches.
Programmes not accessible, leading to low uptake	Implement mandatory "accessibility screening" for all new programmes before launch; involve OPDs in design testing.
Partnership challenges with OPDs	Establish clear MoUs; maintain transparent communication.

8.3. Risk Monitoring

Risks will be monitored quarterly by the Disability Inclusion Unit and reported to EXCO as part of the standard performance reporting process. The risk register will be updated annually based on implementation experience.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) FRAMEWORK

Monitoring and evaluation plays a vital role in ensuring the success of the implementation of any strategy. To ensure that the initiatives of this strategy are implemented and results are realised, the following evaluation schedule will be used:

- Quarterly: Internal progress reviews by the Disability Inclusion Unit.
- Annually: Comprehensive report against this framework presented to the NYDA Board.
- Mid-term (End 2027): Formative evaluation to assess progress and make necessary adjustments.
- Final (End 2028): Summative evaluation to measure overall impact and inform the next strategy.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS)

10.1. Internal NYDA Stakeholders

- CEO and EXCO: Ultimate accountability for strategy success; championing the agenda internally and externally; fostering a disability-sensitive culture and ensuring the provision of necessary

resources.

- Disability Inclusion Unit (National): Central coordination, monitoring, reporting, and technical advice. Specific operational responsibilities include: inspecting work environments for accessibility; managing the confidential Disability Disclosure Form (EEA1) process; providing health and wellness support; establishing and convening a staff Disability Forum; and ensuring the HR information system (SAGE) is updated accordingly.
- HR Division: Leading the implementation of disability-sensitive recruitment, retention, and development policies. Specific responsibilities include: driving and co-ordinating the recruitment procedures for persons with disabilities; ensuring compliance with employment equity targets; facilitating targeted mentorship, coaching, and internship programs; organising mandatory disability sensitisation training for all line managers; and managing the formal grievance procedures for disability-related disputes.
- Facilities Division: Ensuring all NYDA offices and branches are physically accessible and maintained. Specific responsibilities include: providing and maintaining disability-friendly parking, accessible toilet facilities, and overall building access in compliance with universal design principles.
- Supply Chain Management (SCM) Division: Specific responsibility includes: Providing disability-friendly transport for employees with disabilities where required to perform their job functions, recognising accessible transport as a key enabler of workplace participation.

- All Line Managers: Specific responsibilities include: identifying training needs and proactively facilitating career progression for employees with disabilities; ensuring all internal communications and documents (e.g., payslips, manuals) are provided in accessible formats upon request; implementing and monitoring reasonable accommodations within their teams; and familiarising themselves with this strategy and related HR policies to mainstream disability inclusion into all operational tasks.
- Employees with Disabilities: Have the right to request reasonable accommodation and to confidentially disclose their disability via the official Disability Disclosure Form to access necessary support. The onus is on the employee to provide medical verification for non-visible disabilities when requesting specific concessions.
- All Programme Managers (PDDD, NYS): Mainstreaming disability targets and accessibility requirements into their programme design, delivery, and monitoring, ensuring the minimum 4% participation benchmark is met.
- Communications Division: Ensuring all internal and external communications are accessible, in line with the Accessible Communication Protocols (Section 10.3).
- IT Division: Ensuring digital accessibility of all platforms, internal systems, and online services, in compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA standards.

10.2. External Stakeholders

- Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs): Co-design, implementation support, advocacy, and monitoring. (Key Partners: DYSA, NCPD, DEAFSA, SANCB, DPSA).
- Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD): Policy guidance, alignment, and joint advocacy.
- Other Government Departments: Collaboration on overlapping mandates (e.g., Employment and Labour, Social Development, Basic Education, Higher Education and Training).
- Private Sector: Providing job placements, mentorship, and adopting inclusive hiring practices.

10.3. Partnership Mechanisms

Formal partnerships will be governed by Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that clearly outline roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The External Disability Advisory Forum will serve as a key mechanism for ongoing engagement and consultation.

11. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

11.1. Internal Communication Strategy

- Launch: All-staff launch event addressed by the CEO.
- Ongoing: Regular features in internal newsletters; updates at all-staff meetings; dedicated page on the intranet with resources and progress updates.
- Training: Mandatory training sessions for all staff to ensure understanding of the strategy and their role in its implementation.

11.2. External Communication Strategy

- NYDA Board, Public Launch: High-profile event with media, OPDs, and government partners.
- Accessible Documentation: The strategy and annual reports will be published on the NYDA website in multiple accessible formats (PDF, HTML, Easy Read, audio).
- Awareness: Use of NYDA social media channels to promote the strategy's goals and celebrate successes.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Targeted presentations to key stakeholder groups (OPDs, government departments, private sector).

11.3. Accessible Communication Protocols

All communications will adhere to accessibility protocols:

- Digital: WCAG 2.1 AA compliance.
- Documents: Available in accessible PDF, HTML, Easy Read, Braille, and audio formats, upon request.

- Events: SASL interpretation and live captioning will be standard for all public events.
- Media: Imagery used will positively depict youth with disabilities in active roles.
- Targeted Programmes: While mainstreaming is the primary approach, the NYDA will also deliver targeted life skills and entrepreneurship workshops specifically for youth with disabilities to address unique barriers and build peer networks.

11.4. Annual Disability Awareness Calendar

The NYDA will proactively leverage key national and international disability awareness dates to drive its advocacy and communication objectives. This ensures sustained visibility and continuous engagement on disability inclusion throughout the year.

Month	Awareness Focus / Campaign	Planned NYDA Activities & KPI
Jan	-	Internal Planning Month: Finalise annual campaign strategy and budgets.
Feb	-	Internal Planning Month: Finalise annual campaign strategy and budgets.
Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Disability Awareness Month • Human Rights Month (SA) Human Rights Day (March 21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run social media features profiling young leaders with Intellectual Disabilities. • Launch annual "Rights & Access" campaign, linking disability rights to the Bill of Rights. • KPI: Number of campaigns conducted (1 national, 2 targeted social media campaigns).

Apr	Autism Awareness Month (Global) World Autism Awareness Day (2 Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the NYDA's Annual Disability Inclusion Report. • Social media campaign featuring successful young entrepreneurs with autism. • Host a webinar for parents and educators. • Light NYDA offices in blue on 2 April. • KPI: Number of awareness campaigns conducted (1).
May	Global Accessibility Awareness Day (Global) (Every 3rd Thursday of May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an internal and public webinar on digital accessibility. • Showcase the newly accessible features of the NYDA website and online services. • KPI: Number of digital accessibility workshops/presentations held.
Jun	Youth Month (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate youth with disabilities as central figures in all Youth Day activities. Profile young disabled leaders. • KPI: Number of campaigns featuring PWDs (integrated into all Youth Month campaigns + 1 targeted campaign).
Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychosocial Disability Awareness Month (SA) • Mental Illness Awareness Month (SA) 	<p>Run a specific campaign focusing on mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia, challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusion in the workplace and entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI: Number of targeted awareness sessions conducted.
Aug	Women's Month (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the intersection of gender and disability. • Campaign focused on economic empowerment of young women with disabilities, featuring mentorship and networking events. • KPI: Number of targeted campaigns/events conducted (1).

Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albinism Awareness Month (SA) • Deaf Awareness Month (Global) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a specific campaign challenging stereotypes and promoting the rights of youth with albinism. • Promote South African Sign Language (SASL). • Host SASL basic training workshops for NYDA staff and the public. • Profile Deaf entrepreneurs and employees. • KPI: Number of SASL training sessions conducted.
Oct	Mental Health Awareness Month World Mental Health Day (10 Oct)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host dedicated webinars and support sessions on mental well-being for youth with disabilities on World Mental Health Day. • KPI: Number of targeted awareness sessions conducted.
Nov	National Disability Rights Awareness Month (SA, 3 Nov – 3 Dec)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a sustained, multi-platform campaign throughout the month. Themes will align with national directives. • Launch Disability Strategy. • KPI: Number of monthly campaign activities tracked and reported.
Dec	International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 Dec)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a national summit with OPDs and partners to mark the culmination of the advocacy year. • KPI: Number of major public events held (1 summit); Number of reports published.



12. CONCLUSION

This three-year Disability Inclusion Strategy represents NYDA's firm commitment to both realistic planning and transformative ambition. By adopting a sophisticated dual-target framework, we ensure accountable delivery while maintaining the vision necessary to drive meaningful change for youth with disabilities.

The strategy's success will be measured not only by the achievement of numerical targets, but by the tangible improvement in the lives of youth with disabilities across South Africa. Through systematic barrier removal, targeted interventions, and genuine partnership, we will create an inclusive environment where all young people can realise their full potential.

The strategy will be reviewed annually against both minimum and stretch targets, with adjustments made to ensure we meet our core commitments while striving for exceptional impact. The lessons learned during this strategy period will inform the development of subsequent frameworks, ensuring continuous improvement in NYDA's disability inclusion efforts.

This strategy will be reviewed in 2028 to inform the development of the subsequent strategy cycle.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ACCESSIBILITY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

This appendix provides a practical checklist and set of guidelines to ensure the NYDA's services, communications, and environments are accessible to youth with a wide range of disabilities. These should be integrated into all relevant operational plans.

A.1. Digital Accessibility (Websites, Portals, Social Media)

Area	Strategic Intervention	Purpose & Benefit
Website/Portal Compliance	Achieve and maintain WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance as a minimum standard.	Ensures usability for people who use screen readers, keyboard navigation, and other assistive technologies.
Zero-Rating	Zero-rate the NYDA website and all online application portals.	Removes data cost as a barrier for low-income youth.
Document Accessibility	All public documents (PDFs, Word) must be created in an accessible format: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proper tags and reading order• Alt-text for all images• Sufficient colour contrast• Use of built-in styles for headings.	Allows people with visual or cognitive disabilities to access information independently.
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add image descriptions (alt-text) to all graphics.• Use camelCase for hashtags (e.g., #DisabilityInclusion).• Provide captions for all videos.• For audio content, provide a transcript.	Makes social media content accessible to people who are blind, have low vision, or are Deaf or hard of hearing.
Forms & Applications	Ensure all online forms are accessible, clearly labelled, and can be completed using a keyboard alone.	Preforms are often a critical barrier; this ensures equal access to services.

A.2. Physical Accessibility (Branches & Events)

Area	Strategic Intervention	Purpose & Benefit
Universal Access	Ensure at least one step-free entrance with automatic doors.	Essential for wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments.
Navigation	Clear, wide pathways (min. 900mm) indoors. Tactile guiding strips for people who are blind or have low vision.	Promotes independent and safe movement.
Service Counters	Have at least one low-height section of the service counter (760mm – 860mm high).	Allows wheelchair users to interact with staff face-to-face.
Signage	Use large, high-contrast font. Include Braille and pictorial symbols where appropriate.	Assists people with visual, cognitive, or intellectual disabilities.
Lighting & Acoustics	Ensure even lighting to reduce glare and shadows. Use carpets and acoustic panels to reduce background noise.	Helps people with low vision, autism, and those who are hard of hearing.
Events	<p>Standard Protocol: All public events must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Sign Language (SASL) interpreters. • Live captioning for virtual/hybrid events. • A quiet, low-stimulus break-out room. 	Creates an inclusive environment for Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and neurodivergent participants.

A.3. Communication & Information Accessibility

Area	Strategic Intervention	Purpose & Benefit
Multiple Formats	<p>Upon request, provide key information in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Braille • Easy Read (using simple language and images) • Audio (recorded reading) • Large Print (18pt font) 	Caters to diverse needs, including intellectual disability, blindness, and low vision.
South African Sign Language (SASL)	Make SASL interpretation available for key meetings, training, and client consultations upon request.	Recognises SASL as an official language and ensures access for the Deaf community.
Plain Language	Train all staff to use clear, simple language and avoid jargon in all written and verbal communication.	Benefits people with intellectual disabilities, cognitive impairments, and those for whom English is not a first language.
Staff Training	<p>Implement mandatory "Disability Sensitivity" training for all frontline staff, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to offer assistance appropriately. • Basic SASL greetings. • Guide-on-sight techniques. • Interacting with people with various disabilities. 	Reduces attitudinal barriers and ensures a dignified client experience.

A.4. Programme & Service Delivery Accessibility

Area	Strategic Intervention	Purpose & Benefit
Universal Design	Apply universal design principles to the development of all new programmes, grants, and training from the outset.	Cheaper and more effective than retrofitting; benefits all users.
Reasonable Accommodation (RA)	Implement a simple, well-publicised process for staff and clients to request RA. Train managers on approving and implementing common RAs (e.g., screen readers, ergonomic chairs, flexible work hours).	Fulfils a legal obligation and empowers individuals by providing the support they need.
Accessibility Screening	Mandate an "accessibility screening" for all new programmes and marketing campaigns before launch, ideally with input from OPDs.	Proactively identifies and removes barriers before they exclude participants.
Outreach	Ensure outreach programmes are held in physically accessible venues and are advertised through accessible channels.	Prevents exclusion from the very first point of contact.

A.5. Procurement & Partnerships

Area	Strategic Intervention	Purpose & Benefit
Supplier Criteria	Include accessibility criteria in tender documents for services like software development, event management, and marketing.	Leverages NYDA's buying power to drive broader market change towards accessibility.
Partner Expectations	In MoUs with private sector and NGO partners, include clauses encouraging them to adopt inclusive practices for youth with disabilities in their own operations.	Extends the impact of the strategy beyond the NYDA's direct control.

Implementation Note: *These guidelines should be adopted as standard operating procedures. The Disability Inclusion Unit(CSP) will be responsible for auditing compliance and providing technical support to other divisions.*

APPENDIX B: DETAILED THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN WITH DUAL TARGETS

Year 1 (2025/26) – Foundation Phase (**values are estimates**):

Strategic Pillar	Key Activities	Q1 Milestones	Q2 Milestones	Q3 Milestones	Q4 Milestones	Minimum Target (2028)	Stretch Target (2028)	Responsible Division	Budget (R)
Pillar 1	Build capacity at the head office and in all branches	Conduct sensitivity workshops among staff and build capacity	Establish Disability Inclusion Unit at head office	11 Disability Inclusion capacitation and operational	22 Disability Inclusion capacitation and operational	43 Disability Inclusion capacitation	Model employer status	HR	50,000
Pillar 1	Conduct accessibility audits	Internal audit to assist or commission an independent study	Audit HQ & 11 branches	Audit 11 branches	Final report	100% compliance	Best practice recognition	Facilities	150,000
Pillar 2	Launch Accessibility Fund	Fund design	Initial R2M allocation	First 50 disbursements	100 businesses supported	350 businesses	500 businesses	PDDD	5,000,000
Pillar 3	Digital accessibility of all platforms.	Integrate ERP system for accessibility	Jaws	Grant applications	All other services	100% compliance	Best practice recognition	ICT Division	200,000
Pillar 4	Develop Talent Database	System design	Platform development	Testing phase	Launch with 500 registrants	2000 registrants	5,000 registrants	IT/PDDD	200,000
Pillar 5	Sign first OPD MoU	DYSA engagement	Draft agreement	Negotiations	Formal signing	3 MoUs	5 MoUs	Partnerships	400,000

Year 2 (2026/27) – Scale-Up Phase (**values are estimates**):

Strategic Pillar	Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Minimum Target Progress	Stretch Target Progress	Responsible Division
Pillar 1	Conduct Disability Inclusion workshops (e.g. sensitivity works and awareness campaigns)	Number of inclusion workshops conducted	100% inclusion workshops conducted	Excellence standards	HR
Pillar 2	Scale business support	Number of additional businesses	70% of minimum target	80% of stretch target	PDDD
Pillar 3	Expand job placements	Number of placements achieved	57% of minimum target	40% of stretch target	PDDD
Pillar 4	Establish Advisory Forum	Number of meetings conducted	Forum operational	Influencing strategy	Partnerships

Year 3 (2027/28) – Consolidation Phase (**values are estimates**):

Strategic Pillar	Key Activities	Success Indicators	Minimum Target Achievement	Stretch Target Progress	Responsible Division
All Pillars	Impact assessment	Comprehensive evaluation	Minimum targets exceeded	Stretch targets within reach	M&E
Pillar 2	Sustainability planning	Next strategy framework	350+ businesses supported	500 businesses possible	PDDD
Pillar 3	System handover	Database management plan	700+ placements	1,000 placements	PDDD

*****Total Three-Year Budget Estimate: R6,000,000*****

APPENDIX C: LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND OPDs

1. Government Departments

- Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD): Key strategic partner for policy alignment and reporting.
- Department of Employment and Labour: Collaboration on employment equity and workplace placements.
- Department of Social Development: Collaboration on social protection and community-based support services.
- Department of Basic Education & Department of Higher Education and Training: Collaboration on career guidance, transitions from school, and skills development.

2. Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) (Partnership not limited to the ones listed below)

- Disabled Youth South Africa (DYSA): The primary representative body for youth with disabilities.
- National Council of & for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD): Umbrella body providing expertise and a broad network.
- Deaf Federation of South Africa (DEAFSA): For expertise on Deaf culture and South African Sign Language (SASL).
- South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB): For expertise on visual impairments and accessibility.
- South African Federation for Mental Health: For expertise on psychosocial disabilities.
- Disability People South Africa (DPSA): An umbrella organisation for organisations representing people with Disabilities, a key partner for data sharing and outreach.

3. Private Sector & Other Partners

- Business Unity South Africa (BUSA): To facilitate partnerships with major employers for job placements.
- Other SETAs (e.g., W&RSETA): For sharing best practices and co-funding initiatives.
- National Skills Fund (NSF): Potential funding partner for large-scale skills programmes.
- Universities and TVET Colleges: For research, curriculum development, and career services partnerships (e.g. HEDSA).

4. Internal NYDA Stakeholders

- NYDA Board, CEO and Executive Committee (EXCO): Strategic leadership and accountability.
- Disability Inclusion Unit (National): Strategy coordination and monitoring.
- Branch Disability Inclusion capacitation: Implementation at local level.
- All Programme Managers (PDDD, NYS, etc.): Mainstreaming disability in their portfolios.
- Human Resources: Recruitment, training, and workplace accommodations.
- Communications: Accessible internal and external messaging.
- Supply Chain Management: Preferential procurement implementation.
- IT Division: Digital accessibility of all platforms.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF DISABILITY TYPES AND DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Aphasia	Aphasia is a language impairment that affects the production or comprehension of speech, as well as the ability to read and write. Aphasia is always due to injury to the brain, most commonly from a stroke, particularly in older individuals, but brain injuries resulting in aphasia may also arise from head trauma, from brain tumours, or from infections. Aphasia can be so severe as to make communication with the patient almost impossible, or it can be very mild. It may primarily affect a single aspect of language use, such as the ability to retrieve the names of objects, the ability to form words into sentences, or the ability to read. More commonly, however, multiple aspects of communication are impaired, while some channels remain accessible for a limited exchange of information. It is the professionals' job to determine the amount of function available in each channel, for the possibility that treatment might enhance the use of the available channels.
Attention Deficit Disorder With / Without Hyperactivity (ADHD/ADD)	ADHD refers to a chronic disorder that initially manifests in childhood and is characterised by hyperactivity, impulsivity and/or inattention. Not all of those affected by ADHD manifest all three behavioural categories. It can lead to difficulty in academic, emotional, and social functioning. May be associated with other neurological, significant behavioural, and/or developmental/learning disabilities. ADD is, however, a neurological dysfunction. The severity of each learner's symptoms might differ. ADD and ADHD are genetic conditions.
Autism Spectrum Disorder	Autism spectrum disorders impact the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children often experience difficulties with verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities, making it challenging for them to communicate with others and relate to the outside world. A medical practitioner, preferably a specialist (Paediatrician or psychiatrist), must diagnose learners.
Behavioural/Conduct Disorder (Including Severe Behavioural Problems)	Learners with behaviour/ conduct disorder usually have little concern for others and repeatedly violate the basic rights of others and the rules of society. Children and adolescents act out their feelings or impulses in destructive ways. Offences often grow more serious over time. Such offences may include lying, theft, aggression, truancy, setting fires, and vandalism.
Blindness	Loss of useful sight. Blindness can be temporary or permanent. Damage to any

	portion of the eye, the optic nerve, or the area of the brain responsible for vision can lead to blindness. < 3/60 in the better eye, after maximum correction.
Cerebral Palsy	Cerebral palsy describes chronic conditions affecting body movements and muscle coordination. Caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, traumatic, infectious, or developmental. Major types include spastic and dystonic. Athetoid and ataxic, and they can be quadriplegic, diplegic or hemiplegic. A medical practitioner must make the diagnosis.
Deaf Blindness	Deaf blindness refers to the concomitant presence of hearing and visual impairments, which, when combined, result in communication and other developmental and educational needs that differ from those of children with deafness or blindness.
Deafness	Learners who experience a severe hearing impairment and who depend on specialised educational support. Hearing must be assessed through an auditory test, and the hearing loss should be more than 61 dB at 0.5, 1, 2, and 4 kHz in the better ear.
Epilepsy	Disorder caused by the sudden overactivity of brain cells and characterised by repetitive attacks of a diverse nature. Seizures (or convulsions) occur when there.
	is abnormal electrical discharge in the brain. This may be triggered by a chemical imbalance or a structural abnormality. Seizures differ in cause, nature, severity, management, and long-term effect.
Hard Of Hearing	Learners who experience a moderate hearing impairment and who need additional specialised support. Hearing must be assessed through an auditory test, and the decibel loss must be more than 31dB for persons under the age of 15 and more than 41dB for persons 15 years and older.
Intellectual Disability (Mild to Moderate)	Learners with an intellectual disability have significantly lower than average intellectual ability and adaptive functioning, which is characterised by limitations in communication, social, daily living, or movement skills. Individuals with mild to moderate intellectual disability are academically functioning at a level below 75% of that of their peers. (See moderate to severe intellectual disability below) IQ tests are no longer considered appropriate.
Intellectual Disability (Moderate To Severe/Profound)	Learners with moderate to severe/profound intellectual disability are academically functioning on a level below 50% of that of their peers. Some identifiable causes include hereditary factors; chromosome abnormalities, such as in Down Syndrome; brain damage before or at

	birth due to illness or accident; malnutrition or other deprivation in early childhood.
Intellectual Disability (Severe/Profound)	Learners who experience severe intellectual disability and are more than two years behind their peers.
Multiple Disability	Learners who experience more than one of the disabilities.
Partial Sight/Low Vision	Low vision is impairment of visual functioning even after treatment, for example an operation and/or standard refractive correction (has been given glasses or lenses) and has a visual acuity of less than 6/18 to light perception, or a visual field of less than 10° from the point of fixation (i.e., 20° across) but who uses, or is potentially able to use, vision for the planning and/or execution of a task.
Physical Disability	Learners with a significant physical disability that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying.
Psychiatric Disorder	<p>These disorders must be diagnosed by a psychiatrist or psychologist and may include: Personality disorders, which are mental illnesses characterised by several unique qualities. While many disorders vacillate in terms of symptom presence and intensity, personality disorders typically remain relatively constant.</p> <p>Adjustment disorders: These disorders involve a significantly more difficult adjustment to a life situation than would normally be expected, considering the circumstances.</p> <p>Mood disorders: these include those disorders where the primary symptom is a disturbance in mood. In other words, inappropriate, exaggerated, or limited range of feelings, e.g., bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, etc.</p> <p>Anxiety disorders: The primary feature is abnormal or inappropriate anxiety, such as Acute Stress Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive disorder, Phobias, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, etc.</p> <p>Psychotic disorders: The primary symptom of these disorders is psychosis, or delusions and hallucinations. Delusions are false beliefs that significantly hinder a person's ability to function, e.g., schizophrenia.</p>
Specific Learning Disability	A specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding and/or using concepts through verbal (spoken or written) language or nonverbal means. This disorder manifests as a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, reading, communication, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence, and emotional maturity.

APPENDIX E: INTERNAL HR POLICY & PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

This appendix outlines the detailed internal HR procedures that support the implementation of Pillar 1 of this strategy, ensuring the NYDA becomes a model employer for persons with disabilities.

E.1. Recruitment and Selection of Persons with Disabilities

The NYDA will adhere to the following process to ensure fair and equitable recruitment:

1. **Identification & Advertising:** Posts accessible to persons with disabilities will be advertised in media that attract the target group, using the disability insignia and accessible formats. Advertisements for all opportunities (jobs, learnerships, internships, bursaries) must be circulated to Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).
2. **Shortlisting:** An employment equity score of 3% will be added to all persons with disabilities during the shortlisting process, irrespective of race and gender.
3. **Interview Panel:** As far as possible, persons with disabilities will form part of all selection and interviewing panels.
4. **Interview Process:**
 - Reasonable allowances (e.g., more time) must be made if required.
 - A support person must be allowed to accompany the interviewee if requested due to a disability.
 - No questions may be asked about a person's disability. Abilities,

qualifications, and experience are assessed independently.

5. **Post-Interview Disclosure:** Information regarding a disability is collected after the interview using the confidential Disability Disclosure Form (EEA1) to determine necessary reasonable accommodations.

E.2. Disability Disclosure and Confidentiality

1. **Purpose:** The Disability Disclosure Form allows employees to confidentially disclose a disability so the NYDA can provide appropriate reasonable accommodations.
2. **Confidentiality:** All information provided is strictly confidential, kept separate from general personnel records, and will not be shared without the employee's written consent.
3. **Procedure:** Employees complete the form, which a medical practitioner may verify. The form is submitted to the Disability Inclusion Unit.

E.3. Grievance and Dispute Resolution

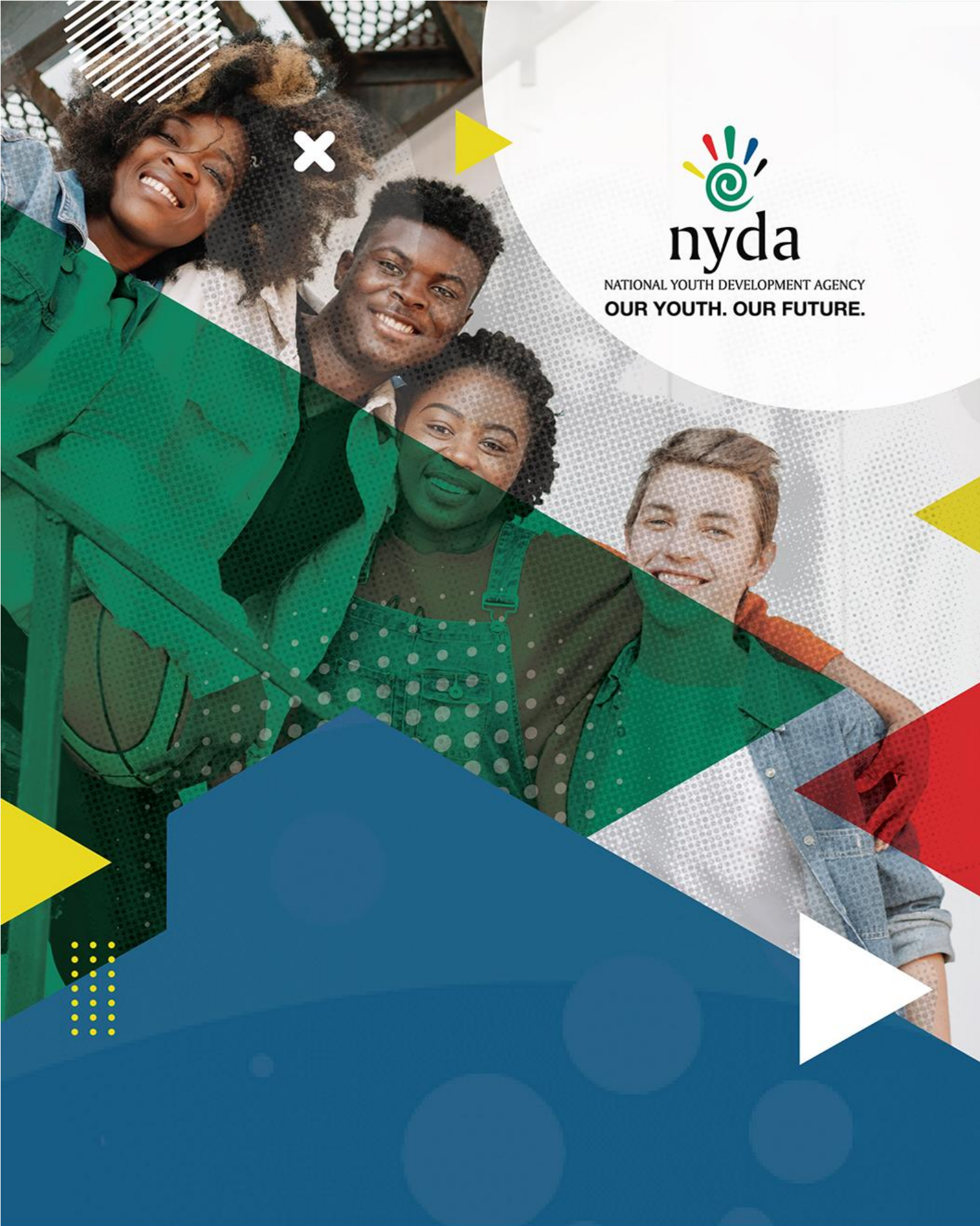
1. **Right to Dispute:** Any employee with a grievance regarding unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability shall have recourse to the prescribed grievance procedures.
2. **Non-Victimisation:** Any individual who registers a complaint will not be prejudiced, intimidated, or penalised, unless the complaint is found to be false or malicious.

3. **Management Action:** The NYDA will take appropriate action through prescribed channels when allegations of unfair discrimination are brought to its attention.

E.4. Support for Employees Who Become Disabled

When an employee becomes disabled, either at work or outside of work, the NYDA is obligated to, where reasonable:

- Accommodate the employee in a suitable post within the NYDA, or
- Modify the person's job role to accommodate their disability.



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