



agriculture, land reform
& rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

REVISED NATIONAL RURAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS (NARYSEC) POLICY 2022

Approval

The status of the document in relation to key policy documents

The document is aligned to key national strategic documents such as the National Development Plan and other national policy and legislative ambits as provided in Section 1.3 of the document.



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MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) Policy is an important document that will act as a guide as to how the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DALRRD) must implement the NARYSEC programme within the context of youth empowerment in rural development.

The Department through its Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) and the National District Development Model (DDM) provides holistic strategy towards developing rural areas.

These services are delivered in a manner that engage and empower rural communities to actively participate towards the improvement of their quality of life and overall economic up-liftment of their communities. The NARYSEC Programme therefore forms part of the broader community development approach adopted by the DALRRD.

The NARYSEC Policy draws its manifest from the National Youth Development Policy of 2009 – 2014, National Youth Policy of 2015-2030 and the National Development Plan Vision of 2030 that is currently being implemented as an essential planning tool, guiding the country on holistic approaches towards youth development.

Emanating from this National Youth Policy are various proposal documents, such as the NARYSEC Policy, that seek to position youth development in the mainstream of South Africa's developmental agenda and programme.

High levels of unemployment, deepening poverty and increasing inequalities have been identified by the South African Government as three persistent challenges the country must overcome. Nowhere is the impact of these three challenges more acutely experienced, than in the rural communities of South Africa. Rural communities daily face various challenges, which include:

- ☐ High levels of unemployment, particularly amongst the youth;
- ☐ Lack of vocational skills, against a backdrop of very limited job opportunities, exacerbating this situation; and
- ☐ Lack of economic and social development, including limited access to government services as well as basic services.

Youth face particular challenges in gaining employment in the South African labour market. The unemployment rate amongst young people 15 - 24 years and 25 - 34 years of age, recorded the highest unemployment rates of 66.5% and 43.8% respectively in the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) of Statistics South Africa for Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2021.

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It is the mandate of the DALRRD to implement interventions to support and capacitate rural communities, with a specific focus on the upliftment of youth and women, so that they can meaningfully participate in the economy.

The NARYSEC Programme, which was established in September 2010, is one of the contributions of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) towards alleviating the high levels of unemployment amongst young people in rural areas.

The main focus of the NARYSEC Programme is to capacitate rural youth so that they can become economically active and contribute towards the upliftment of their rural communities.

The primary objectives of the re-focused NARYSEC Programme are to:

- ☐ Recruit unemployed rural youth as part of the rural economy transformation strategy;
- ☐ Build the capacity of rural youth through various skills development interventions;
- ☐ Facilitate the transitioning of recruited youth into economic activities;
- ☐ Encourage recruited youth to be involved in the upliftment of their communities; and
- ☐ Provide post programme support to youth that have exited the programme.

The adoption of the NARYSEC Policy by the DALRRD, as a catalyst for youth empowerment, will assist the programme in its endeavour to empower young people.

It is, however, important to note that the full implementation of this policy, by all units and branches within the DALRRD, will ensure the realization of the core objectives of the programme.


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2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The programme has had two formal impact evaluations (2013) and 1 review conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2018/19. In 2018 the Human Sciences Research Council and the Department embarked on a joint review of the programme. Approximately 1400 stakeholders were consulted during the 2018/19 review process including former NARYSEC participants, TVET colleges and other training providers, the National Youth Development Agency and internal and external government officials.

Some of the key problems identified by the HSRC from the last review in 2018 was that the programme was excellent at skills development but evidence showed that the skills and qualification level acquired by NARYSEC graduates is still too low to enable them to compete with graduates from regular programmes of TVET colleges or those from universities, in a labour market characterized by high levels of unemployment. The qualifications are not even deemed sufficient to establish a niche of artisans that would shield NARYSEC graduates from that competition. Another challenge is the lack of a systematic tracking of, and structured support for NARYSEC graduates after completion of the programme. There also appeared to be a mismatch in the types and levels of skills offered by NARYSEC training programmes and those that are in demand on the labour market.

The policy therefore aims to accelerate youth development in line with other government programmes and priorities through the establishment of partnerships and recruiting youth with the end in mind. Youth will now be recruited through multi-stakeholder collaboration and aligned to economic opportunities in a district.

The programme has had two formal impact evaluations (2013) and 1 review conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2018/19. In 2018 the Human Sciences Research Council and the Department embarked on a joint review of the programme. Approximately 1400 stakeholders were consulted during the 2018/19 review process including former NARYSEC participants, TVET colleges and other training providers, the National Youth Development Agency and internal and external government officials.


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3. CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

The CRDP was developed as a holistic strategy to develop rural areas. The aim of NARYSEC is to develop a cadre of young people who would become change agents within their communities. It also sought to equip unemployed rural youth with the appropriate skills needed to gain access to employment opportunities and engage in productive activities that contribute to the realization of the CRDP's vision of vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities. Two iterations of the policy and programme have been implemented in the last decade, with the second one in 2015 after a comprehensive evidence-based review led to significant changes in the programme in terms of its duration (from 48 to 24 months) and introduction of key phases (skills phase linked to government programme opportunities such as for disaster management, Agri-Parks, land reform, etc.).

The NARYSEC Programme has, to date, enrolled 17 393 youth since its inception in September 2010. 11 475 of the enrolled youth have exited the programme for various reasons, which include completing their skills programme, resignation, death, and termination due to absconding from training.

This policy document outlines the implementation framework of the NARYSEC programme. Further details on NARYSEC implementation processes are documented in the NARYSEC procedural manual, standard operating procedures and circulars.

The Department's expanded mandate is linked to the National Development Plan's vision for an integrated and inclusive rural economy and to respond to development needs of specific territorial areas.

The issue of land forms the basis of development in many rural areas as well as commercial farmland in South Africa and therefore an essential part of the strategy includes the implementation of an improved land tenure system. Youth are crucial in transforming the rural economy. Young women and men in rural areas face constraints with regard to both accessibility and availability of services and facilities, resulting in fewer opportunities employment than in urban areas.


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3.2 Understanding the Character of Youth

Youth is a heterogenous group within society that often reflect the spiritual and material divisions in that society. This group may exhibit the following characteristics:

- ☐ Youth are socialised and moulded within specific social environments (rich, poor, urban and rural);
- ☐ Youth assimilate knowledge of all kinds;
- ☐ Young people are continuously searching for a rational understanding of their surroundings. They display curiosity, rebelliousness, impatience, and enthusiasm/energy. As a result, all societies seek the minds of young people in order to tap into their energy for various country programmes; and
- ☐ Youth may be easily influenced into activities that are counter-productive to their own interests.

Young people in rural areas are the future of the agricultural and rural sector, but often lack the guidance and support necessary to fully contribute to the development of their communities, thereby fuelling the vicious cycle of rural underdevelopment, mass migration to cities and poverty, and the destruction of family units. Acknowledging and addressing their needs and aspirations is vital for rural economic growth and agrarian transformation.

3.3 The National Development Plan

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 speaks to Integrated Rural Development as a vehicle to reduce youth unemployment and revitalize rural economies. The NDP further recognizes that South Africa has an “urbanizing and youthful population. This presents an opportunity to boost economic growth, increase employment and reduce poverty.”¹ The NDP has adopted a “youth lens” in preparing its proposals, *inter alia*:

- a) Strengthen youth service programmes and introduce new, community-based programmes to offer young people life-skills training,

¹ National Planning Commission, 2012: *National Development Plan 2030: Our Future Make it Work*. [available online] <http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/NDP-2030-Our-future-make-it-work.pdf>

- entrepreneurship training and opportunities to participate in community development programmes;
- b) Expand learnerships and make training vouchers directly available to job seekers;
- c) The programme will be aligned to government priorities and legislation that govern skills development in the country as outlined in the NDP and CRDP

3.4 Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)

The CRDP was launched by the Department in July 2019, it is a programme designed aimed at ensuring that all spheres of government achieve social cohesion and development of rural areas. The CRDP is an enabling vehicle that will ensure that rural people to take control of their livelihoods with the support by government. It was specifically introduced to deal with rural poverty effectively through an integrated agrarian transformation and strategic investment in economic and social infrastructure that will benefit these rural communities.

Government through CRPD programme puts specific emphasis on the promotion of economic growth through creation of work and therefore improving the quality of life of rural households, enhancing food security through exploiting the economic opportunities in those rural areas. Some key components of the CRDP include:

- a) Community Mobilisation and Empowerment;
- b) The CRDP Job Model which includes value chains and enterprise development; and
- c) Adding value to land reform processes in CRDP sites.

The CRDP makes provision for a rural employment and skills training model which has set a platform for the NARYSEC programme to enter into partnerships that will ensure the training of unemployed youth and transitioning them into the economic opportunities. The CRDP therefore forms the basis on which the variety of skills development interventions implemented through the NARYSEC Programme are built.


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3.5 Legislative and Policy Frameworks

The following existing policy and legislative environments create a rich basis for the continued improvement and implementation of the National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC):

- ☐ The National Qualifications Framework through the South African Qualifications Act of September 1995;
- ☐ The National Youth Commission Act 19 of 1996
- ☐ The National Skills Development Act of November 1998;
- ☐ The National Empowerment Fund Act No.105 of 1998;
- ☐ National Youth Policy 2020-30 of July 2020; and
- ☐ The Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy, 2020.

4. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Vision

The long term vision is to capacitate unemployed rural youth in various skills and to facilitate their transition to meaningfully contribute towards vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural economies.

4.2 Mission

To empower the youth and enhance opportunities for economic participation through skills development, enterprise development and or employment

4.3 Objectives

The objectives of the Programme are as follows:

- a) Recruiting unemployed rural youth as part of the district development model and other approved government programmes and initiatives working with provinces, the private sector, municipalities and local traditional councils;
- b) Building the capacity of rural youth through various skills development interventions;

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- c) Facilitating the transitioning of the recruited youth to participate in economic activities and.
- d) Provide post programme support to the youth that have exited the programme and link them to economic opportunities.²

4.4 Strategic Outcomes

Linked to the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), the strategic outcomes of the NARYSEC programme are:

- a) Skilled rural youth ready to take up economic opportunities;
- b) Economically active youth in rural areas;
- c) Youth-led enterprises contributing to the economy of the country.

4.5 Values

The National Youth Policy 2030 promotes the following values:

- ☐ Change agents;
- ☐ Inherent worth and dignity of youth;
- ☐ Moral regeneration;
- ☐ Social beings;
- ☐ Youth empowerment; and
- ☐ Equality.

² This would be covered under a separate strategy dealing with youth that have exited the programme and are still unemployed or not involved in entrepreneurship.

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5. PROJECT OVERVIEW

5.1 Project Implementation Phases

In order to recruit for a purpose, the Department may utilize various strategies in order to target areas of high youth concentration and poverty nodes. The programme will be implemented through the five phases outlined below:

- PHASE 1:** Targeted Recruitment and Profiling.
- PHASE 2:** Induction Programme and Youth Leadership Development.
- PHASE 3:** Skills Development.
- PHASE 4:** Job Creation and Linking to Economic Opportunities

NARYSEC PROGRAMME PHASE DIAGRAM

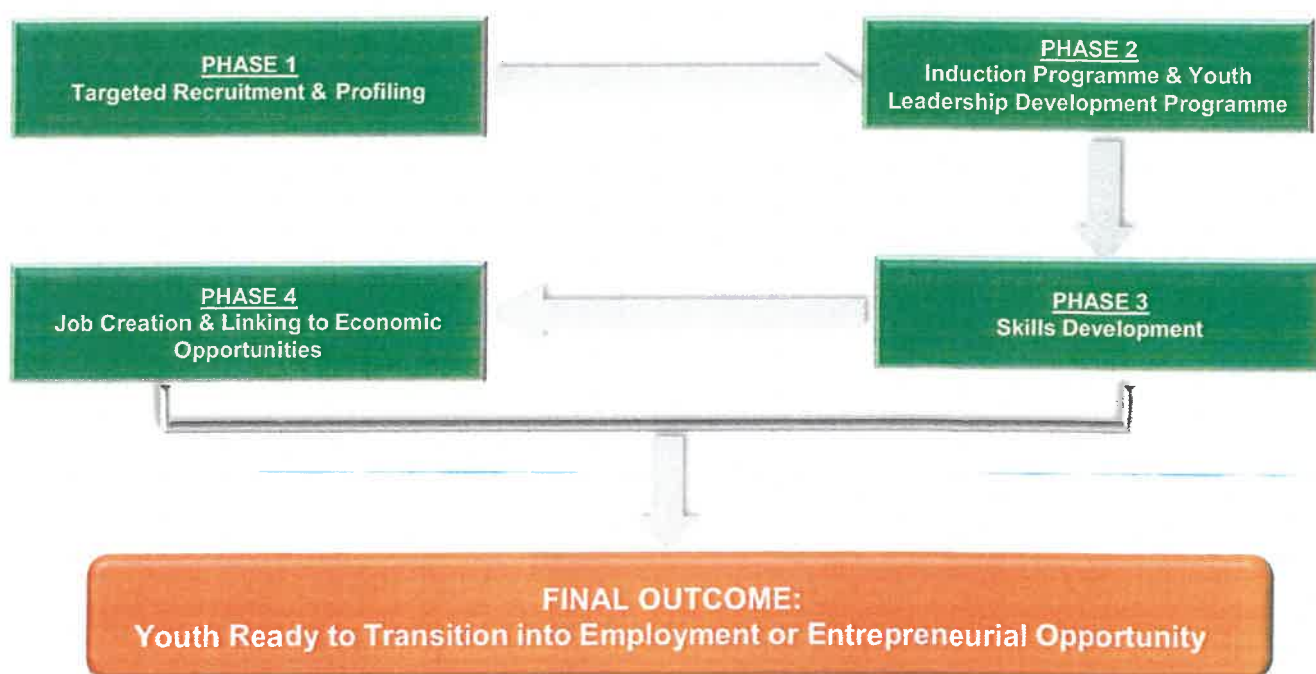


Figure 1: High Level Process Flow

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5.2 PHASE 1: Targeted Recruitment and Profiling

Targeting and profiling will take place in consultation with relevant stakeholders as part of the District Development Model and other approved government programmes and initiatives. The targeting will be spatially based and where economic and other entrepreneurial opportunities have been identified. This will be a more proactive approach so that the recruited youth will be placed upon exiting the programme.

5.2.1 Targeted Recruitment

(i) Selection Criteria

- ☐ The programme will target unemployed rural youth between the ages 18³ – 35.
- ☐ minimum qualification required is a grade 9, except under extenuating circumstances youth without a grade 9 will be considered.
- ☐ Youth must reside in a rural area or targeted urban priority areas.
- ☐ Youth must be unemployed or part of an active business.
- ☐ At least 50% of the Youth recruited must be females.
- ☐ The programme will also target youth with disabilities.⁴
- ☐ Former NARYSEC participants who are still unemployed may also be targeted for particular employment or entrepreneurial opportunities in a district.

³ A referral system is being developed and young people that do not fall within this age cohort will be referred to other programmes of government or non-government stakeholders for further assistance.

⁴ *The White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016*, recognises: disability as an evolving concept. Disability is imposed by society when a person with a physical, psychosocial, intellectual, neurological and/or sensory impairment is denied access to full participation in all aspects of life, and when society fails to uphold the rights and specific needs of individuals with impairments. Persons with disabilities experience three main types of interrelated barriers: • social (including high cost, lack of disability awareness, and communication difficulties); • psychological (such as fear for personal safety); and • structural (including infrastructure, operations and information).

(ii) Enrolment and Contracting

- ☐ Signing of contracts
- ☐ Registration on the PERSAL system of the department
- ☐ Uploading on the Information Management System

(iii) Contractual Obligations

- ☐ The selected applicants will be expected to sign a contract confirming their commitment to the programme. The contract will set out basic roles, rights and obligations of the parties and should not be interpreted as employment contracts.

(iv) Stipends and Remuneration

- ☐ Stipend will be paid from the 2nd phase on successful completion of the Youth Leadership compulsory training,

5.3 PHASE 2: Induction Programme and Youth Leadership Development Programme

(i) Induction Programme

- ☐ The third phase of the programme will be a compulsory induction programme which will take place at a suitable venue. This compulsory phase of the Programme will introduce the youth to relevant government policies, programmes and legislation, career planning and life skills.

(ii) Youth Leadership Development Programme

- ☐ Once the youth have completed their induction programme they will go through the Youth Leadership Development Programme (YLDP), implemented in partnership with the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and/or relevant identified training providers. The YLDP will have a strong focus on Leadership, Community Development and enterprise development


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5.4 PHASE 3: Skills Development

- (i) Skills Development interventions will be packaged and implemented with the youth in accordance with identified economic opportunities. The programme will implement accredited occupational and/or artisanal programmes and non-accredited skills programmes
- (ii) Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, public Universities, Community Colleges, Universities of Technology, Agricultural Colleges and other recognized (accredited or non-accredited) private institutions/training providers will be the training suppliers of choice for the NARYSEC Programme. The Department may also approach and partner with government entity e.g. Agricultural Research Council to design fit-for-purpose or customized experiential learning programmes. As such, their services will be procured to deliver training for the youth in the NARYSEC Programme, provided that they have the capacity to offer the required training. The Department may also partner with the National Youth Development Agency, Youth Employment Service Programme and other relevant institutions on joint training initiatives.
- (iii) Community service is a compulsory element of the programme which will be achieved through various community outreach projects, community service will cover a minimum of 100 hours and will be integrated into the skills development phase of the programme.

5.5 PHASE 4: Job Creation and Linking to Economic Opportunities

- (i) **Job creation**
The Programme aims to link NARYSEC youth to employment and enterprise development opportunities within all spheres of government, social and private sector through targeted recruitments

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(ii) Enterprise Development

The Department acknowledges that youth enterprise development and support are shared responsibilities and vital in the development of rural areas.

The department aims at facilitating the provision of starter packs, start-up funds, training, mentorship, business development support, incubation and other programmes, in order to support youth enterprises in partnership with external stakeholders.

6. GOVERNANCE

- 6.1** Political oversight remains the responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.
- 6.2** The Director-General is responsible for providing strategic and fiscal direction.
- 6.3** The Deputy Director-General is responsible for providing strategic direction, policy monitoring and advice in supporting the NARYSEC Programme.
- 6.4** The NARYSEC Programme at operational level is managed by the Chief Director and National and Provincial Senior Management.
- 6.5** The revised NARYSEC Policy underscores the importance of partnerships, at all levels, required for the successful implementation of the refocused NARYSEC Programme.

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

In line with the intentions of NARYSEC to be outcomes and results driven, the DALRRD has developed a results-based monitoring and evaluation framework (**attached as Annexure A**) that will be used to measure the outcomes of the NARYSEC programme.

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The programme is expected to follow established reporting protocols, as per the departmental monitoring & evaluation framework.

7.2 Risk Analysis

The NARYSEC Policy will be implemented in an environment with several risks emanating from the internal and external environments. While not all risks may be identified, the following have been identified and analysed. The risks will be monitored throughout the planning and implementation period, while necessary being made as circumstance may change. These risks are:

No	Risk Description	Mitigation Measures
1.	Minimal positive socio-economic impact made in the rural communities due to: ☐ Inability for entrepreneurs to access the business markets; ☐ Lack of permanent employment opportunities; and ☐ Youth unable to start and maintain profitable businesses with significant contribution towards gross domestic product.	☐ Maximise the utilisation departmental programmes and incentives in partnership with other Branches; ☐ To collaborate with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, Small Business Development and other government structures in terms of incentives; and ☐ Collaboration with private sector and investors from the targeted industries.
2.	Challenges in providing effective support to start entrepreneurship due to: ☐ Unavailability of land/ space to conduct business; ☐ Lack of support from local/ traditional leaders; ☐ Budgetary constraints (reliance on partnerships); and ☐ Lack of interest from the targeted investors.	☐ To recommend the inclusion of NARYSEC youth in the Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy; and ☐ Coordinate and obtain commitment of funding from various departmental programmes ☐ Memoranda of agreements with partners who will provide funding including other government departments or spheres of government and the private sector.

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3.	Reluctance of youth to participate in community upliftment projects due to: ☐ Lack of/ inadequate incentives; and ☐ Lack of support.	☐ To revive or maintain relations with local stakeholders; ☐ Targeted profiling and recruitment of young people; and ☐ Make community service compulsory for a minimum of 100 hours.
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8. SUMMARY

After considering the recommendations of the NARYSEC programme review and improving the impact of the programme, the following will serve as the basis of implementation of the policy

- ☐ Unemployed youth aged between 18-35 will be recruited from rural communities driven by the local needs
- ☐ Targeted youth must have completed grade 9, except in extenuating circumstances.
- ☐ Skills development interventions will be aligned to the exit opportunities.
- ☐ The programme duration will be determined by the pre-arranged economic opportunity and will be subject to available budget and other resources and but will not exceed 36 months
- ☐ Participants will be paid a monthly stipend only after completion of the compulsory induction and Youth Leadership Development Programme (YLDP) and an additional allowance (only during the training phase).
- ☐ Participants must be available for the compulsory phase 1 of the programme at the identified implementation site and for the skills development programmes.
- ☐ Targeted participants will be issued with certificates / statement of results on successful completion of the programme
- ☐ Participants that have completed the programme in the past will be considered for further support or upskilling through various programmes of the department and other external stakeholders in the public and private sector.

End.

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