



## 1. Introduction

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The Centre for Youth Development and Activities (CYDA) was founded with a vision to empower young people to grow, thrive, and transform their communities. Since its inception in 1999, CYDA has touched the lives of over a million young people across the states of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, and Gujarat, including those from marginalized communities, helping them become responsible, healthy, productive, and independent individuals.

At CYDA, our mission is to nurture young minds, equipping them with the leadership skills necessary to champion values like gender equity, diversity, and democracy. We facilitate access to quality education, life skill development, and essential services through initiatives like Youth Resource Centres (YRC) and Community Resource Centres (CRC). Our aim is to create opportunities and foster a generation that engages and contributes meaningfully to nation-building. We believe in inclusive development and focus our efforts on those who need it the most.

With 28% of its population aged between 15 and 29, India holds immense potential, but young people often face barriers that limit their opportunities. CYDA is dedicated to bridging this gap by creating platforms where youth can explore their dreams, engage with society, and excel in life. Here, young people find a space to express themselves freely, rediscover their passions, and pursue their goals with renewed confidence.

At CYDA, we help youth **EXPLORE**, **ENGAGE**, and **EXCEL** by **INSPIRING** them to think differently, **INVOLVING** them in community activities, and supporting their **INITIATIVES**. Our work aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring inclusive and equitable growth, all being rooted in the values of the Indian Constitution.

As we look to the next ten years, CYDA aims to help young people overcome challenges, advocate for their rights, and contribute to sustainable development. Investing in young people today lays the foundation for a brighter and more equitable tomorrow.

## 2. The Need for a Strategic Plan



**The new strategic plan for CYDA aims to adapt to the evolving context of youth development, focusing on innovation and stakeholder engagement to better address the needs of young people. This plan will refine CYDA's vision, mission, and strategic objectives, ensuring relevance and impactful interventions for the next decade.**

The team at CYDA recognizes that while we are clear about our mission, the organization requires a blueprint or roadmap to guide its work. In an ever-evolving world, a strategic plan is essential for any organization aiming to make a meaningful impact. As CYDA embarks on crafting the next 10-year strategic plan, it is crucial to reflect on our past, evaluate our current position, and chart a dynamic path forward. The context of youth development has shifted significantly, especially in the wake of COVID-19, necessitating a renewed focus and innovative approaches to effectively address the needs of young people.

The need for this updated strategic plan stems from our commitment to remain relevant and impactful in a rapidly changing environment. Our previous strategic plan laid a strong foundation, but we must build upon it with fresh energy and insights. This new plan will guide us in refining our vision, mission, and strategic objectives to better align with current challenges and opportunities.

This strategic planning process enables us to engage with our stakeholders, including community members and partners, and integrate their valuable insights into CYDA's strategic direction. It also offers a chance to reconnect with our dedicated members and integrate their perspectives into our future path. By reassessing our goals and evaluating our achievements and areas for improvement, we aim to develop targeted interventions that enhance our effectiveness and reach. Additionally, this process will help us strengthen our existing capabilities, address weaknesses, and optimize material and human resources to advance our mission. This strategic plan will serve as a comprehensive roadmap, directing CYDA towards excellence and a more significant impact in fostering the growth and development of young people.

The genesis of CYDA's Strategic Plan and the detailed process for formulating its 5th Strategic Plan are provided in Annexure I for reference.

## 3. Consolidating Steps and Identifying Key Components

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The process of the 5th Strategic Plan began with a review and reflection phase, including a "looking back" exercise and engagement with spin-off entities of CYDA like YouthAid Global and YouthAid Foundation to evaluate progress and unify efforts. Collaborative discussions with stakeholders identified challenges, gathered actionable recommendations, and aligned the strategy with youth needs and ground-level insights. During the ideation phase, a SWOT analysis was conducted to assess CYDA's position and shape its future direction. The envisioning process employed the '7S' Framework to integrate findings, optimize resources, and set strategies for growth, ensuring CYDA's continued leadership in youth empowerment.

Following the preparatory steps for the strategic plan, the following key components have been identified to ensure that CYDA continues to fulfil its mission while adapting to new challenges and opportunities.

**3.1 Strengthening Organizational Identity and Vision:** Over the past quarter-century, CYDA has evolved, experiencing shifts that have occasionally led it to drift from its original mission and identity. It is now essential to refocus on its core objective—fostering youth development. CYDA's programs should cultivate responsible, healthy, and independent young adults. To achieve this, CYDA must revisit and realign its strategic objectives, ensuring that its actions directly reflect the organization's core vision and mission. The renewed focus should place youth engagement at the forefront, embedding it into every aspect of program design, execution, and outreach. A return to CYDA's roots will help clarify its purpose and strengthen its future efforts.

**3.2 Revitalizing Youth Engagement:** CYDA was founded by and for youth, which makes youth engagement the cornerstone of its success. As it moves forward, CYDA must renew its approach to engaging young people by developing strategies that foster meaningful and sustained involvement. Young people should play a central role in decision-making processes, and their perspectives should guide the organization's activities. This more profound connection with youth will ensure that CYDA remains relevant and effective in addressing the challenges young people face today.

**3.3 Youth-Centric Program Focus:** CYDA's interventions must adopt a holistic, youth-centric approach. Programs should be re-designed to meet the diverse needs of young people, addressing their social, emotional, educational, and professional development. Rather than treating adolescent and youth programs as separate, CYDA should integrate these initiatives into a singular, cohesive effort focused on the development of young people. This unified approach will streamline resources and increase the impact of CYDA's interventions, allowing the organization to more effectively nurture youth from adolescence to adulthood.

**3.4 Assessing Strengths and Weaknesses Before Proposal Submissions:** Before embarking on any new initiative or submitting a proposal, CYDA must conduct a thorough assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. This self-evaluation is crucial for ensuring that the organization's efforts align with its expertise and capacities. For example, while CYDA excels in the social sector, entering fields like pure science or technical agriculture might dilute its impact. Instead, CYDA should focus on areas where it has already demonstrated success, ensuring sustainability and maximizing the effectiveness of its programs.

**3.5 Collaboration and Expanding Partnerships:** Collaboration is a powerful tool for creating lasting social change. CYDA should prioritize expanding partnerships with other organizations, especially smaller ones that may lack the skills or resources to maximize their potential. By offering support and collaborating as implementing or technical partners, CYDA can help create synergies that lead to greater collective achievements. Additionally, CYDA's partnerships with its spin-off organizations, YAG and YAF, should be deepened. While CYDA focuses on soft skills training for youth, YAG and YAF can concentrate on hard skills development. This collaboration will enable the organizations to leverage their strengths for a broader impact.

**3.6 Building Autonomous Entities:** While CYDA has ventured into areas such as LGBTQIA+ advocacy and WASH interventions, it is essential that these initiatives remain aligned with the organization's core mission of youth development. If these efforts grow beyond CYDA's primary focus, they should be transitioned into autonomous entities. This approach ensures that CYDA remains dedicated to youth development while allowing other important initiatives to thrive under its leadership. An Advisory Board will be established for each autonomous entity to guide the development of a clear and strategic road map.

**3.7 Geographical Expansion:** A clear, strategic plan should drive CYDA's geographical expansion. Urban areas, in particular, present emerging challenges due to rural-urban migration, and CYDA is well-positioned to address these issues. By focusing on both short-term and long-term initiatives, CYDA can respond effectively to the needs of growing urban populations while maintaining a strong presence in rural areas.

**3.8 Strengthening the Alumni Network:** CYDA's alumni network represents a valuable resource for ongoing support, advocacy, and mentorship. Strengthening this network will enable CYDA to better achieve its mission by providing a platform for alumni to share their experiences, offer guidance to current youth participants, and contribute to the organization's goals. Engaging alumni will also help CYDA build stronger relationships with stakeholders and donors.

**3.9 Preparation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Every Program:** To ensure consistency, efficiency, and accountability across all operations, SOPs should be developed for every CYDA program. These SOPs will serve as detailed guidelines for program implementation, enabling teams to follow standardized procedures and achieve high-quality outcomes.

**3.10 Risk Management Document:** A risk management document is vital for safeguarding CYDA's operations. It will outline procedures for identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks, ensuring that all programs and activities are conducted responsibly and sustainably. This document will enhance CYDA's resilience and capacity to navigate challenges effectively.

**3.11 Strengthening Support functions:** A comprehensive system will be designed to effectively integrate key functions, including resource mobilization, social media management, communication, recruitment, and data management. This will promote efficiency, collaboration, and strategic alignment, enhancing the organizations' collective impact.

**3.12 Development of Tools to Measure Behavioral Change Communication:** CYDA should develop tools to assess the impact of its Behavioral Change Communication programs. These tools will include both quantitative and qualitative measures, enabling a comprehensive evaluation of the outcomes and changes brought about by the organization's interventions.

**3.13 Data Management:** To demonstrate its impact effectively, CYDA must develop a centralized data collection and dissemination system. This system will enable the organization to track, record, and showcase its achievements, providing clear evidence of its success and fostering greater stakeholder engagement.

**3.14 Documentation and Publication:** Investing in robust documentation and publication processes is critical for CYDA's visibility and credibility. By regularly producing reports, case studies, newsletters, and multimedia content, CYDA can communicate its successes and challenges to a broader audience, including donors and the public.

**3.15 Social Media Promotion:** CYDA must strengthen its social media presence by implementing a dynamic strategy that highlights its work among the youth. Engaging and visually appealing content should be shared regularly to keep stakeholders informed and attract new supporters.

**3.16 System Strengthening:** As CYDA transitions into its next phase, it is essential to reinforce its internal systems. Adherence to SOPs, policies, and protocols will ensure that the organization operates efficiently and effectively as it establishes itself as a distinct and recognized brand in the social sector.

**3.17 Defining CYDA's Ethos:** To preserve CYDA's core values and mission, the organization will prepare a document outlining its ethos. This document will serve as a guiding framework, ensuring that CYDA's culture, principles, and mission remain intact as it grows and evolves.

## 4. Youth in India: Understanding Challenges to Plan Better

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Understanding the challenges faced by India's youth is crucial before planning interventions. A strategic panel discussion at CYDA examined the country's youth issues, shaping a meaningful action plan.

**4.1 Changing Perspectives of Today's Youth:** Modern Indian youth navigate a rapidly changing world influenced by globalization, technology, and evolving social norms. These shifts have reshaped how they view and engage with society, altering their values, priorities, and participation in civic life.

**4.2 Youth Engagement in Social Change:** Unlike past generations who favored organized movements, today's youth are more individualistic in their approach to activism. They want to express their views but often lack effective platforms. This shift can be traced to technological changes and social dynamics, reshaping how young people perceive their societal roles.

**4.3 The Youth Unemployment Crisis:** Despite economic progress, India struggles with high youth unemployment. Approximately 83% of the unemployed in India are youth. A critical reason is the mismatch between education and market demands, with many Indian students leaving education without the skills needed for employment.

**4.4 Skills vs. Degrees:** A Critical Gap: Indian education heavily emphasizes theoretical knowledge, leaving graduates with degrees but lacking in employable skills. According to a UNICEF report, approximately 47% of Indian youth may not acquire employment-relevant skills by 2030<sup>1</sup>. Vocational training programs, although available, are not sufficiently integrated into mainstream education. This gap between education and employment-ready skills significantly contributes to India's youth unemployment.

**4.5 The Educational System's Role in Dropouts:** High dropout rates after secondary education, especially among marginalized communities, continue to be an issue. Poor infrastructure in educational institutions limits holistic student development, exacerbating the skill gap. As a result, only 10% of Indian youth find employment in the organized sector.

**4.6 A Decline in Critical Thinking:** With a constant influx of information, many young people have lost the ability to think critically. Instead of deeply analyzing and questioning information, they react quickly and emotionally. Fostering critical thinking is essential to developing informed, thoughtful citizens capable of addressing complex societal issues.

<sup>1</sup>:UNICEF. 2022. *Global Framework for Reimagining Education*. United Nations Children's Fund

**4.7 Lack of Direction Among Youth:** Many young people today struggle with a clear direction in life, a challenge compounded by limited career guidance and socio-economic barriers. The pervasive influence of social media often sets unrealistic expectations, leading them to prioritize superficial pursuits over meaningful, long-term goals.

**4.8 Low Participation of Youth in Governance:** Youth participation in politics and governance is notably low, leaving their voices underrepresented in policy and decision-making. This disengagement restricts their ability to contribute to societal change and influence policies affecting their future.

**4.9 Erosion of Human Values among Youth:** The growing emphasis on individualism has weakened the collective sense of responsibility that underpins societal cohesion. Influenced by modern cultural shifts, youth are often disconnected from principles like solidarity and communal well-being. Promoting empathy, respect, and shared responsibility is essential to fostering a peaceful and inclusive society.

**4.10 The Need for Special Initiatives for Girls and Women:** Gender inequality continues to limit opportunities for girls and women in India. Despite some progress, systemic barriers, cultural norms, and biases restrict their access to education, leadership, and social participation. While men need gender sensitization to change attitudes, empowering women helps dismantle structures that perpetuate inequality. CYDA proposes creating a dedicated Gender Unit to address these issues through targeted programs that foster gender equity and ensure greater participation of women in society.

**4.11 Impact of Social Media on Self-Esteem and Self-Perception:** Social media has had a profound impact on youth self-esteem, with many young people comparing themselves to unrealistic portrayals online. The pursuit of online approval often leads to anxiety, depression, and distorted self-perceptions as they struggle to separate curated personas from reality.

**4.12 Misinformation and Media Illiteracy:** Indian youth face challenges in distinguishing credible information from misinformation, which proliferates on social media and online platforms. Many unknowingly contribute to the spread of false information. Media literacy programs are crucial in equipping youth with the tools to critically assess information, ensuring informed decision-making, and reducing societal divisiveness.

**4.13 Addiction:** Substance abuse, including drug and alcohol use, is a growing issue among Indian youth, driven by peer pressure, stress, and lack of awareness. Screen addiction has also emerged as a significant problem, with excessive time spent on social media and online gaming leading to isolation, poor academic performance, and mental health issues. Addressing these forms of addiction requires comprehensive educational and mental health support programs.

**4.14 Youth and Mental Health:** Mental health issues among Indian youth are increasing, driven by academic expectations, societal pressures, and a rapidly changing social environment. Alarming rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide highlight the need for accessible mental health support and early intervention programs. The stigma surrounding mental health often prevents young people from seeking help. Addressing this crisis requires broader societal changes to create a supportive environment where youth feel empowered to seek assistance.

India's youth face complex challenges across various domains—education, employment, mental health, and social engagement. Comprehensive initiatives, skill development, mental health support, and fostering values-based education are essential for addressing these issues and enabling youth to contribute meaningfully to society.



## 5. Stakeholder Analysis

**5.1 Young People:** CYDA's strategy emphasizes a comprehensive approach to youth development, focusing on empowering young people through tailored programs that foster leadership, education, and skill development. For over 25 years, CYDA has engaged youth aged 13–29, with extensions up to 35 years for those with special needs, disabilities, or extreme marginalization. Aligning with India's National Youth Policy 2023, CYDA aims to engage young people aged 13 to 24 in various settings like schools, urban slums, and villages. CYDA's programs will focus on decision-making, empowerment, improved communication skills, increased confidence and resilience, behavioural changes, health and well-being, independence and responsibility, and the productivity of youth. Moreover, CYDA will extend support beyond the age of 24 for women who missed educational or career opportunities due to early marriage or motherhood, offering them skill-building and empowerment programs. This approach addresses gender inequality while continuing CYDA's mission of youth transformation.

### 5.1.1. Key Categories of Youth in CYDA's Strategic Plan

CYDA has identified several key categories of youth to target with tailored interventions, ensuring their unique needs are addressed effectively.

**Dalit Youth:** Dalit youth, who belong to India's lowest caste, continue to suffer from severe discrimination that limits their access to education, employment, and social opportunities. Despite affirmative actions like reservation policies, Dalit youth often face exclusion and violence. CYDA's programs in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh aim to address these inequalities by empowering Dalit youth through education and skills training and helping dismantle the barriers created by entrenched caste-based discrimination.

**Urban Affluent Youth:** Youth from privileged backgrounds living in urban areas may have access to superior resources and education but often lack awareness of the socio-economic inequalities around them. CYDA's work with students aims to sensitize them to the struggles faced by marginalized communities, fostering empathy and promoting active participation in social change. Through its Youth4Change program, CYDA has engaged students in Pune to develop a deeper understanding of social justice and inequality.

**Urban Slum Youth:** Youth in urban slums face compounded challenges such as limited access to education, poverty, and exposure to crime and violence. CYDA's YRCs, established in 2019, offer urban slum youth access to skill development, personal growth opportunities, and essential resources for overcoming the limitations of their environment. The center provides educational and vocational programs that help bridge the gap between slum youth and their more privileged urban counterparts, focusing on livelihood improvement and self-empowerment.

**Adolescents:** Adolescence is a critical phase of development where individuals form their identities and begin preparing for adult responsibilities. Many adolescents, especially in disadvantaged communities, struggle with behavioral issues, delinquency, and school dropouts due to a lack of guidance. CYDA has established CRCs across Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, and Telangana, providing adolescents with personal growth, life skills, and mental health support. By focusing on early interventions, CYDA aims to set adolescents on a path to success.

**Houseless Youth:** Houseless youth are particularly vulnerable to challenges like unemployment, substance abuse, and limited access to basic services. CYDA began working with houseless individuals in Pune through its Youth4Change initiative, conducting studies to understand the struggles of houseless families. The findings of studies highlighted issues such as a lack of sanitation, education, and employment opportunities. CYDA continues to advocate for the rights of houseless youth and develop programs aimed at providing essential services and support for these marginalized individuals.

**Rural Youth:** Rural youth in India face many disadvantages compared to their urban counterparts, such as poor infrastructure, inadequate healthcare, and limited educational opportunities. Traditional social norms and limited awareness of career options further exacerbate their challenges. CYDA's programs in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh aim to bridge this gap by offering skill development, education, and employment opportunities, enabling youth from rural areas to improve their quality of life and grow out of a cycle of poverty.

**Tribal Youth:** Tribal youth are among India's most marginalized communities, often struggling with issues like displacement, lack of education, and exclusion from mainstream society. Nomadic and de-notified tribes, in particular, face severe poverty and discrimination. CYDA's work with tribal youth focuses on providing access to education, healthcare, and skills training to help them overcome systemic barriers and build better futures. Efforts are concentrated in tribal areas of Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, where CYDA seeks to uplift these communities and advocate for their rights.

**Youth in High-Risk Situations:** High-risk youth are those vulnerable to engaging in illegal or risky behavior due to factors such as poverty, houselessness or substance abuse. CYDA works with several sub-groups within this category, including migrant youth, those in conflict with the law, youth involved in sex work, and those living with HIV. These youth require targeted interventions that provide education, healthcare, mental health services, and mentorship, helping them lead positive, productive lives.

**Specially Abled Youth:** Specially abled youth face significant physical and psychological challenges that limit their opportunities for education and employment. These individuals often struggle with social isolation and low self-esteem, in addition to physical limitations. CYDA aims to enhance their quality of life by providing access to adaptive technologies, specialized training, and supportive services, enabling them to overcome barriers and lead fulfilling lives. Inclusive practices are central to CYDA's strategy for empowering specially-abled youth.

**LGBTQIA+ Youth:** LGBTQIA+ youth are frequently subjected to discrimination and social stigma, leading to significant mental health and economic challenges. Many youth from this community lack access to essential healthcare, education, and vocational training, leaving them at a high risk of houselessness and unemployment. CYDA's strategic plan includes providing targeted resources, education, and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ youth, ensuring they have access to the support they need to build stable, empowered lives.

**Minority Youth:** Youth from marginalized minority communities (religious and caste minorities) often face systemic discrimination, socio-economic barriers, and a lack of opportunities, limiting their potential. CYDA's strategic focus on minority youth aims to foster inclusivity and empowerment by enhancing their access to education, healthcare, and employment. Through collaboration with local leaders and grassroots organizations, CYDA works to create safe spaces, promote leadership, and build self-reliance among minority youth, ensuring they can contribute to a more equitable society.

**5.2 Parents:** Parents are critical stakeholders in CYDA's youth programs as they significantly shape their children's values and development. Their active involvement is necessary to foster a supportive environment for youth to succeed. Through parental engagement, CYDA can strengthen interventions in education, mental health, livelihoods, and more. By working closely with parents, CYDA ensures that young people have the necessary support system at home, empowering them to become confident, independent individuals capable of navigating life's challenges.

**5.3 Government and Policymakers:** Collaborating with government entities and policymakers is essential for long-term, impactful change for youth. CYDA has actively participated in youth policy formulation and aims to prioritize this area going forward. This collaboration will include policy reviews, budget analysis, and advocacy efforts. Moreover, CYDA will involve young people in policymaking processes, empowering them to shape policies affecting their lives and ensuring their voices are heard and valued in decision-making circles.

**5.4 Educators:** Educators, including teachers and members of School Management Committees, play a pivotal role in CYDA's youth programs. They help ensure access to quality education and address challenges adolescents face in their personal growth. At the college level, professors also serve as key stakeholders, shaping students' perspectives and future careers. Through collaboration with educators, CYDA aims to create an environment where young people are encouraged to develop their full potential, building on the foundation of quality education and personal empowerment.

**5.5 NGOs and the Corporate Sector:** CYDA seeks to collaborate with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and the Corporate Sector to maximize its impact on youth development. By pooling resources, expertise, and local insights, CYDA can address complex challenges more effectively. Partnerships with NGOs and CBOs can enhance efforts in education, health, and livelihoods, while corporate engagement can bring innovative solutions, access to resources, and skill-building opportunities. This multi-sector collaboration is essential for creating a sustainable approach to youth empowerment and ensuring that young people can access real-world opportunities.

**5.6 Employers:** Employers, particularly those in the organized, unorganized, and public sectors, are critical stakeholders for CYDA. Many young people, especially those in unorganized sectors, face poor working conditions and are unaware of their rights. CYDA aims to collaborate with employers to address these issues and improve conditions for young employees, particularly migrants and those in vulnerable sectors. By fostering better communication between employers and young workers, CYDA hopes to create a more equitable workplace environment where youth are informed of their rights and provided growth opportunities.

**5.7 Community:** The broader community is a crucial stakeholder in youth development. CYDA recognizes that achieving an equitable and just society requires the active participation of both the youth and the community where they belong. By fostering collaboration between organized youth groups and community efforts, CYDA aims to create an environment where young people are supported, empowered, and encouraged to reach their full potential. A sensitized society will play a fundamental role in shaping youth who are responsible, proactive, and engaged in making positive societal changes.

**5.8 Media:** In today's digital world, social media has become an influential force in shaping the lives of young people. The COVID-19 pandemic heightened the role of media as a primary source of connection and inspiration for youth. CYDA views media influencers, media students, correspondents, and employees of media houses as key stakeholders in leveraging this powerful tool.

**5.9 Healthcare Providers:** The increasing importance of mental health, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, has made healthcare providers essential stakeholders in CYDA's youth initiatives. These providers are crucial for delivering the support systems necessary to address the emotional and psychological needs of young people. By collaborating with health professionals and healthcare providers for both physical and mental health, CYDA aims to offer comprehensive health services that include early intervention, resilience-building, and continuous support for youth to navigate the challenges of today's socio-cultural environment.



## 6. SWOT Analysis 2024

The stakeholders and the core members conducted a SWOT analysis, carefully assessing CYDA's current status while also considering the broader socio-economic and political landscape in India and around the world. This analysis allowed us to determine our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, ensuring that our strategies are well-aligned with the realities and challenges facing the communities we serve.

### STRENGTHS



- **A clear focus on youth development**
- **Grassroots presence**
- **Engagement during disasters**
- **Extensive reach and positive reputation**
- **Inclusive and dynamic approach**
- **Clear vision with adaptability**
- **Dedicated team with stable finances**
- **Culture of inclusiveness**
- **CSR partnerships**
- **Staff development plans**
- **Value-driven democratic systems**
- **Systems and Policies**
- **Transparent communications**

### IMPROVEMENTS



- **Stronger leadership is required.**
- **Need to ensure clear communication with staff**
- **Team coordination to be improved**
- **Diversify funding sources**
- **An effective system to monitor and build brand**
- **Corpus and reserve fund to be created**
- **Independent office space**
- **Media presence to be effective and more extensive**
- **Effective induction plans are required**
- **Operational procedures to be streamlined**
- **Knowledge sharing and enhancement**
- **Staff engagement with youth networks through conferences**

## OPPORTUNITIES



- Increased CSR funding
- Social media technologies
- Collaborative programs with the government
- Digital transformation
- Large youth population
- Social stock exchange and impact investment
- Global support for SDGs
- Collaborating with international organizations
- Potential to develop innovative programs
- Growth of volunteerism among corporates

## THREATS



- Funding volatility
- Regulatory constraints, scrutiny
- Competition for resources
- Changing donor priorities
- Lack of Skilled human resources
- Limited government support
- Economic slowdown and inflation
- Bureaucratic disinterest
- Political apathy towards environment and human rights
- Overreliance on CSR funding
- Poor public perception of nonprofits
- Cultural barriers while working on inclusivity



## 7. Key Intervention Areas

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CYDA conducted a comprehensive exercise to set its intervention areas for the next decade, involving detailed discussions with stakeholders and team members. This process was crucial for identifying emerging issues and adapting to the evolving needs of communities. The feedback gathered during these discussions was instrumental in prioritizing areas for intervention. The list of all proposed areas was compiled, and the following programmatic areas were established through prioritization and consensus-building.

**7.1 Working for Young People's Rights and Development:** CYDA's strategic plan for working with youth focuses on empowering individuals aged 13 to 24 by providing them with the resources, opportunities, and exposure they need to unlock their full potential. Particularly committed to marginalized youth, CYDA aims to bridge the gap between education and career prospects by offering targeted support in areas like remedial education, life skills development, and innovation. With the increasing influence of digital media, even adolescents as young as 10 have the potential to gain knowledge about themselves and their futures. However, many from underprivileged backgrounds lack access to these opportunities, leading to a disconnect from career pathways.

To address this, CYDA will implement initiatives such as STEM and AI programs and expand CRCs to create supportive spaces for growth and exploration. In addition, the organization recognizes the mismatch between degrees pursued and career-relevant skills, which often leaves youth frustrated and unemployed. To combat this, CYDA's initiatives, like Youth4Change, leadership programs, internships, and career guidance, are all aimed at exposing youth to diverse career opportunities and skill-building.

The plan will also prioritize working with high-risk youth, promoting gender sensitization, and fostering inclusivity through programs like Stepping Stones Training of Trainers (SSTOT), Talking to Adolescents about Reproductive Health and Gender (TARANG), and campaigns addressing domestic violence and adolescent health. By replicating CRCs and YRCs in various intervention areas, including a new YRC center in Chhattisgarh, CYDA aims to provide both soft and hard skills training to equip youth for a successful future.

**7.2 Right to Mental Health and Well-being:** According to a recent UNICEF report, approximately 14% of 15 to 24-year-olds in India (about 1 in 7) reported being frequently depressed or losing interest in daily activities<sup>2</sup>. The situation has deteriorated further since the pandemic.

<sup>2</sup>: UNICEF. (2021). *The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind: Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health*

Additionally, social media presents significant challenges, including cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, and pressure to meet unrealistic standards, which can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and even suicidal thoughts. Given these circumstances, it is crucial to provide young people with a platform that offers guidance and support, helping them make informed decisions about their future and navigate these challenges effectively.

CYDA will focus on raising awareness about mental health within the community and providing primary support to adolescents and youth. Through a structured process, it will identify individuals in need and connect them with specialized mental health organizations. However, CYDA will not directly provide counseling, psychological, or psychiatric services but will link with likeminded organization around them.

**7.3 Right to Skill Development and Employment:** In today's job market, practical and up-to-date skills outweigh traditional degrees. CYDA is dedicated to empowering young people by offering comprehensive soft skills training that is essential for success in any field. For advanced technical expertise, CYDA will collaborate with its partner organizations to deliver targeted hard-skill development programs, ensuring that youth are well-prepared to thrive in their careers. CYDA will focus on providing targeted support for youth (as outlined in section 5.1.1) by addressing their unique challenges and offering tailored career and livelihood opportunities. Interventions will be designed to enhance their productivity and ensure they can seize meaningful career and livelihood opportunities.

**7.4 Right to Equity and Equality for Young Women:** CYDA is committed to promoting equality and equity with a special focus on bridging the gender gap in society through targeted interventions. Our innovative programs, such as the Non-Traditional Livelihood (NTL) Program, Awwaz Hamari, and the NTL Alliance, address gender disparities across multiple domains. In the domestic sphere, we will challenge the traditional gender roles and advocate for equal responsibilities within households. In the public sphere, we will work to dismantle societal norms that perpetuate gender inequality and promote inclusive environments. Additionally, we will combat occupational segregation in the work sphere and support gender parity in career opportunities and leadership roles. By engaging a wide range of stakeholders, CYDA will focus on dismantling systemic barriers and promoting social justice, fostering a more equitable society.

**7.5 Youth in Climate Action:** CYDA aims to address climate change by actively engaging youth in climate action and environmental stewardship. Recognizing their critical role in shaping the future, CYDA will raise awareness about environmental degradation and mobilize young people to take action. Additionally, CYDA will connect youth with organizations dedicated to climate sustainability, fostering collaborative efforts for a greener future.

## 8. Geographical Focus

CYDA's work with young people in India considering the mentioned focus areas—Intensive interventions, direct Interventions (both long and short-term), collaborative interventions, and network collaborations—can be done effectively by building a layered approach focusing on impact, sustainability, and scalability. Below is a proposed strategy based on these intervention types:

**8.1 Intensive Interventions:** This approach addresses systemic challenges across multiple sectors (education, livelihood, health) for a larger youth population at different levels. CYDA may follow the Intensive Model by implementing programs in the following areas after conducting a needs assessment:



This will involve establishing district-wide programs and multiple thematic areas and coordinating with government and other developmental partners. This intervention can be a 12 to 15-year plan. Through this approach new ideas can be proposed for intervention. It fosters innovation and adaptability. The key impact data can be collected and monitored to ensure effective implementation.

**8.2 Direct Intervention (Long term):** This approach provides targeted, sustained intervention in specific locations focusing on deeper change in select communities. The intervention aims to build youth leadership programs, fostering their roles as local community change-makers, influencers, and mentors to implement long-term educational and vocational training programs that align with the local economy and market demands. The intervention will focus on life skills (communication, critical thinking, financial literacy) and promote initiatives such as internships and apprenticeships for sustainable employment opportunities. Through this approach new ideas can be proposed for intervention. This intervention may be five to seven years to ensure in-depth transformation.

**8.3 Direct Interventions (Short Term):** This approach focuses on pressing challenges faced by young people that require urgent but short-term attention. This includes a program from one month to three years, including vocational training in industries that offer quick job placements. The intervention will involve creating rapid response interventions in disaster-prone areas, particularly targeting youth resilience and rebuilding skills post-crises. These include immediate intervention programs in disaster-affected areas focusing on rebuilding livelihoods and skills training to help youth recover from disasters. This approach focuses on implementing only proven and established ideas/program of CYDA.

**8.4 Collaborative Interventions (Long Term or Short Term):** This approach focuses on leveraging existing expertise and resources from partner organizations for a shared goal by building long-term partnerships with universities, international NGOs, and corporates that focus on areas like higher education, entrepreneurship, and employability. It will involve collaborating with local organizations for skill development camps, youth festivals, and career counseling workshops that focus on immediate impact. CYDA will develop public-private partnerships with industries that can offer internships and entry-level employment opportunities. It will focus on cross-sector collaborations for specific needs, like tech education (e.g., partnering with tech companies to deliver coding and IT skills to rural youth). Through this approach, only proven and established ideas/program of CYDA can be implemented. Based on program complexity, the duration can be six months to five years.

**8.5 Network Collaborations:** This approach involves fostering a strong network of organizations that can provide expertise, resources, and policy support for CYDA's youth initiatives. This will include identifying and actively participating in national and international youth networks (G20, Youth Alliance, etc.) to foster knowledge exchange. Collaborations with national youth policy networks will be done to influence positive policy changes in education, employment, and mental health.



## 9. Looking forward



As CYDA celebrates 25 years, the organization will develop a new strategic plan for the next decade, focusing on youth empowerment, digital advocacy, mental health, sustainability, and inclusion. By leveraging partnerships and digital platforms, CYDA aims to address the evolving needs and aspirations of India's youth, ensuring their active participation in social and economic change.

As CYDA celebrates its 25th anniversary, it is crucial to develop a strategic framework for the next ten years that addresses the evolving needs and challenges of young people in India. Over the past two and a half decades, CYDA has become a crucial platform for youth rights, capacity building, and advocacy. Still, a rapidly changing socio-political and technological landscape requires a renewed focus and strategy to remain relevant and impactful. Here's a strategic justification for CYDA's forward-looking vision, considering the future changes among young people.

India's youth demographic continues to be a powerhouse for social and economic change. However, the needs and aspirations of young people are shifting. Youth seek employment and meaningful career paths that align with their values—environmental sustainability, social justice, and innovation. CYDA will position itself as a leader in understanding these emerging aspirations by creating initiatives focusing on youth empowerment through career development, entrepreneurship, climate action, and digital literacy.

CYDA will leverage digital platforms to amplify youth voices, provide accurate information, and foster digital literacy. A strategy that includes building a strong digital presence and engaging with youth through online campaigns and digital advocacy will be crucial in shaping narratives and mobilizing youth for collective action.

Over the next ten years, CYDA will prioritize mental health initiatives, providing accessible support systems for youth. Collaborating with mental health professionals, integrating wellness into schools and community programs, and promoting open dialogues on mental health will be essential to address post-pandemic challenges.

**CYDA will align its objectives with the SDGs by creating youth-driven programs that focus on sustainable development, education reform, gender empowerment, and environmental advocacy. Collaborating with governmental agencies, NGOs, and international organizations will allow CYDA to integrate youth voices into India's development agenda.**

**In the next decade, CYDA will double down on promoting diversity and inclusion. Programs specifically targeting marginalized groups, fostering safe dialogue spaces, and advocating for inclusive policies are essential. CYDA should also engage in capacity-building programs that empower youth from these communities to become leaders and change-makers in their respective fields.**

**CYDA will bridge this gap by nurturing a new generation of young leaders. Focusing on leadership development programs, advocacy training, and civic engagement will ensure that young people remain active participants in shaping India's future. CYDA can collaborate with schools, universities, and civic organizations to create leadership academies, forums, and workshops that equip youth with the tools to drive social change.**

**CYDA will expand its skill program in employability and entrepreneurial training programs to include business skills, digital marketing, financial literacy, and access to funding. This approach can empower young people, especially from marginalized backgrounds, to build sustainable businesses and contribute to local economies.**

**CYDA will integrate climate action into all of its programs by promoting green entrepreneurship, sustainable livelihoods, and environmental stewardship. By training youth to become environmental advocates, CYDA can contribute to the national and global effort to combat climate change.**

**Developing a robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework will allow CYDA to capture lessons learned and incorporate them into future programs. This data-driven approach will ensure that CYDA's programs remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of India's youth.**

## 10. CYDA Vision for 2035

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CYDA's next decade will require a dynamic and flexible approach to youth development that embraces innovation, digital transformation, and inclusivity. By aligning with the SDGs, fostering leadership, and advocating for mental health, diversity, and climate action, CYDA will solidify its role as a leading youth development organization in India. With strategic partnerships, a focus on digital engagement, and a commitment to evidence-based impact, CYDA is well-positioned to create a more equitable and inclusive future for India's youth by 2035.



**10.1 Vision:** To empower young people to fully exercise their rights and realize their potential, fostering a society where they grow into responsible, healthy, productive, and independent adults who contribute positively to their communities.

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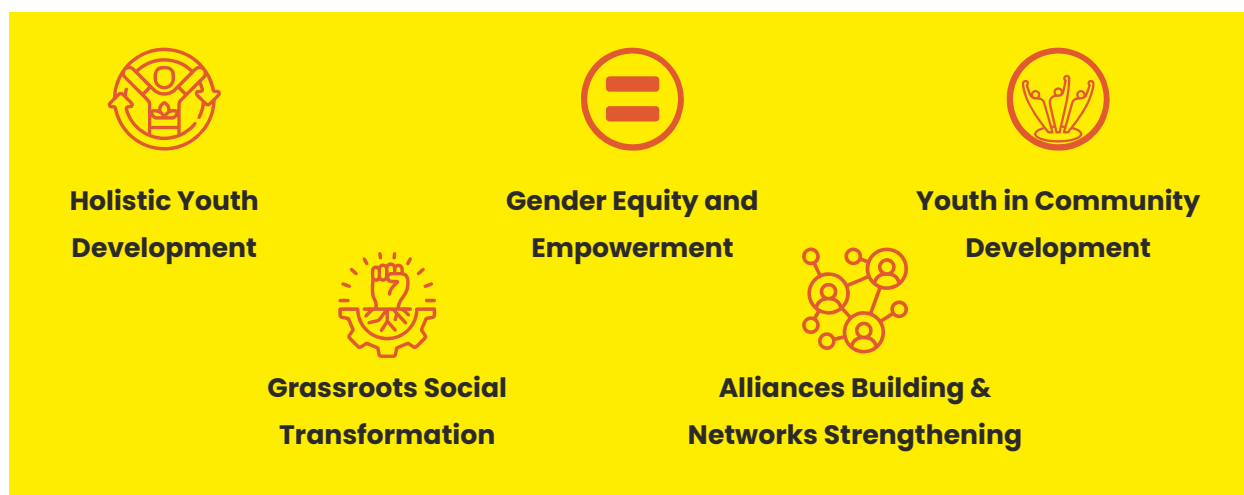
**10.2 Mission:**

1. To build the capacities of young people and their communities, addressing the growing needs of young people by providing platforms for advancement, advocating for policy changes, and empowering marginalized groups through collective action and rights realization.
  2. To foster an inclusive society by equipping youth and stakeholders with the skills and opportunities needed for their holistic development, supporting policy advocacy, and ensuring the empowerment of marginalized communities through the active participation of young leaders.
- 



**10.3 Goal 2035:** By 2035, CYDA aims to empower and transform the lives of 1 million young people across India, becoming a national leader in youth development through innovative, inclusive, and sustainable programs that focus on education, entrepreneurship, and social equity. CYDA will drive systemic change by fostering leadership, promoting rights-based approaches, and creating pathways for marginalized youth to realize their full potential. For this, CYDA will reach 3 million new beneficiaries across the country, developing skills and empowering at least 1 million young people.

## 10.4. Intervention Strategies:



**10.4.1** Holistic Youth Development means an integrated approach combined with adolescent and youth development into one comprehensive strategy that addresses physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. The key components are Life skills training, mental and physical health programs, educational and vocational support, and leadership development.

**10.4.2** Gender Equity and Empowerment means a targeted intervention by developing programs that address gender disparities and promote equal opportunities. The key intervention activities are gender sensitive curricula, mentorship programs, leadership training and initiatives to combat gender =based violence and discrimination.

**10.4.3** Youth in Community Development means developing context specific strategies to create youth development programs tailored to the unique needs of rural, urban, and tribal communities. The key components are community participation, localized skill development, infrastructure development that responds to regional challenges with a special focus on underserved locations and unreached communities such as LGBTQ, youth in high-risk categories and vulnerable communities.

**10.4.4** Grassroots Social Transformation means supporting grassroots organizations that are already active in community mobilization by building capacities, technical assistances, and providing platforms to generate discussion on social transformative programs and policies.

**10.4.5** Building Alliances and Networking means fostering collaborations and partnerships with government bodies, NGOs and community groups, and private sector stakeholders to amplify impact. Key components are stakeholders' meetings, shared resource pools and collaborative projects, networking for social empowerment.

## 10.5 Strategic Objectives of CYDA

**10.5.1 Objective 1:** Empower young people nationwide by advocating for their rights, fostering self-development, enhancing growth opportunities, and providing skills for employability and holistic participation in society.

Youth advocacy means by CYDA is a process that empowers young people to take control of their lives and become active citizens. Youth advocacy creates positive change among the youth and enables them to become responsible, productive individuals and promote social justice based on the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The process involves mobilizing youth and leveraging collective action to achieve a significant impact and drive lasting change.

### Action Plan

**Advocacy and Awareness of Youth Rights:** Focus on sharing its success stories with the government. These success stories can be replicated at a larger scale or incorporated into government schemes. Collaborate with government bodies, NGOs, and youth networks to create a stronger platform for youth voices and advocate for policies that address the needs of marginalized youth.

**Skill Development and Employability Programs:** Implement targeted vocational training, soft skills development, and digital literacy programs to equip youth with the skills needed for employability. Partner with corporates, educational institutions, and skill development centers to offer internships, apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities, ensuring youth are job-ready and prepared for the evolving job market.

**Youth Leadership and Self-Development Programs:** Launch leadership and personal development initiatives that promote self-awareness, critical thinking, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Establish mentorship networks and youth-led forums to nurture future leaders who can actively contribute to their communities and beyond.

**Enhanced Educational Opportunities:** Provide remedial education, STEM programs, and life skills training for underprivileged youth to bridge gaps in education. Establish scholarships, access to digital tools, and supplementary educational support to ensure youth from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to grow and excel.

**Health and Well-being Initiatives:** Promote mental, physical, and reproductive health awareness by conducting workshops, setting up health camps, and partnering with healthcare providers. Develop resources and support systems to address mental health issues, sexual health education, and general well-being, ensuring holistic development.

**Inclusive Youth Participation in Governance and Civic Engagement:** Encourage youth to actively participate in urban and rural governance structures and civic activities by providing platforms for political representation and community involvement. Facilitate programs that foster a sense of social responsibility, volunteering opportunities, and participation in local, state, and national decision-making processes to empower youth to be change agents in society.

### Proposed Activities

The proposed activities for youth development aim to nurture skills, leadership, and community engagement among young individuals. This includes programs such as the **Yuva Mitra**, which focuses on self-development, and **Yuva Sahayogi**, which focuses on peer mentorship for their academic, professional, and social journeys. **Yuva Saathi** emphasizes youth support networks, enabling collaboration and mutual assistance, building resilience, and creating a sense of belonging. **Y Talk** serves as a platform for young voices to share their ideas, experiences, and solutions to contemporary challenges, encouraging public speaking, confidence, and knowledge exchange among youth. Other initiatives will include **youth mobilization** efforts around key social issues, motivating collective action and civic participation, and **exposure programs** to provide youth with real-world experiences, broadening their perspectives by engaging them with different industries, communities, and sectors.

**10.5.2 Objective 2:** Forge strategic alliances with youth and youth-led organizations to advocate for young people's rights through targeted engagement on thematic issues and impactful program interventions.

### Action Plan

**National Youth Advocacy Campaigns:** Organize large-scale, multi-channel advocacy campaigns focusing on thematic issues such as education, health, gender equality, and youth participation in governance. Use social media, digital platforms, and traditional media to amplify the voices of young people and advocate for policy changes.

**Thematic Youth Summits and Regional Conferences:** Host annual national and regional youth summits on key issues such as youth employment, mental health, and gender rights. These events will serve as platforms for advocacy, knowledge sharing, and leadership training, ensuring young people are equipped to drive social change.

**Youth Digital Learning and Advocacy Platform:** Develop an online platform where young people can access information on their rights, share their experiences, and participate in virtual discussions on thematic issues. The platform will feature e-learning modules, advocacy toolkits, and opportunities for youth to participate in action-oriented programs.

**Youth-led Grassroots Interventions and Action Programs:** Support and fund youth-led community action programs addressing key thematic issues, such as gender-based violence, environmental sustainability, or access to education. Provide training, mentorship, and resources for young leaders to implement impactful interventions in their communities.

### Proposed Activities

The proposed activities for this objective include interventions such as Youth4Change and alliances such as the Youth Alliance, NTL Skills Alliance, and Young Farmers Alliance. It will include youth campaigns, conferences, skill training courses, and youth-led programs.

**Youth4Change** empowers young individuals to become agents of social change by promoting civic engagement, leadership, and advocacy. **Youth-led programs** foster ownership and leadership, enabling them to design and implement initiatives that directly address their needs, enhancing personal growth and societal contribution. Through initiatives like the **Youth Alliance**, **NTL Skills Alliance**, and **Young Farmers Alliance**, youth can collaborate across sectors, sharing resources and knowledge to address common challenges, fostering unity and broader impact. The programs will include **skill training courses** to ensure youth gain the competencies needed in today's job market, promoting financial independence.

**10.5.3 Objective 3:** Invest in staff development by fostering continuous learning, collaboration, and excellence, ensuring a motivated, skilled team aligned with CYDA's mission and goals.

#### Action Plan

**Leadership and Management Skills:** Equip staff with leadership by training them to build their capacity and skills. Various sessions will be conducted to enhance their decision-making and team management skills to foster a culture of ownership, innovation, and accountability. Strong leaders at all levels will drive programs more effectively, align teams with CYDA's mission, and nurture the next generation of leaders within the organization.

**Program Design and Management:** Train staff in advanced program design, management, and impact evaluation techniques. This includes using data-driven tools, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and effective resource management. Enhanced program management skills will lead to more efficient and impactful program delivery, ensuring that CYDA's interventions are scalable and sustainable.

**Digital Literacy and Innovation:** Enhance digital literacy across the team, focusing on using digital tools for program delivery, virtual engagement, and leveraging data analytics to measure impact. This will allow CYDA to adopt modern outreach, advocacy, and learning approaches, reaching more beneficiaries while adapting to a tech-driven world.

**Advocacy and Communication Skills:** Develop strong advocacy, public speaking, and communication skills among staff to enhance CYDA's visibility and influence in policymaking, fundraising, and community engagement. Effective communication will allow CYDA to build stronger relationships with stakeholders, increase awareness of its initiatives, and drive change at both grassroots and policy levels.

### Proposed Activities

The proposed activities include staff induction, mentorship, knowledge-sharing workshops such as program management training, digital tool workshops, documentation workshops, and fundraising workshops. Program management workshops will equip staff with essential skills to plan, execute, and monitor programs, while digital tool workshops will improve proficiency in new technologies. Documentation workshops will improve organizing skills, while fundraising workshops will train staff on how to secure resources and develop donor relationships. The proposed activities are vital for unlocking the full potential of staff by fostering continuous learning, skill development, and collaboration.

#### 10.5.4 Indicators for Program Monitoring

Indicators	Means of Verification
Behavior changes among youth	Pre-test and Post-test report
Types of community engaged	Records of Volunteering
Improved confidence of youth	Pre-test and Post-Test report
Categories of youth	Records of Marginalized and Minority youth

Indicators	Means of Verification
Number of youths enrolled in Yuva Mitra*	Enrolment List
Number of youths enrolled in Yuva Sahayogi**	Enrolment List
Number of youths enrolled in Yuva Sathi***	Enrolment List
Number of youths enrolled in different programs	Enrollment List
Number of youths successful in different fields	Certification list
Number of youths excelled in respective fields	Achievement records, case studies
Number of Youth Joined in Alumni Group and Active	List of members in the Alumni Group

\*Mitra: Youth actively enrolled in learning and development programs.

\*\* Sahayogi: Youth actively participating in community engagement and leadership activities.

\*\*\* Sathi: Youth who have excelled in their careers or personal growth and are now role models for others

### 10.5.5 CYDA's Youth Outreach Plan (in 000)

Year	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
Reach out	200	225	250	275	300	325	350	375	400	425	3000
Influenced	20	40	60	80	100	120	130	140	150	160	1000
Trained	10	20	30	40	50	60	65	70	75	80	5000
Excelled	5.4	6.9	8.4	8.9	9.9	10.65	11.6	12.5	13.6	14.55	100

### 10.5.6 Excelled Indicators

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
<b>Young Professionals</b>										
X	100	200	300	400	500	600	750	950	1200	5000
<b>Youth4Civic Connet</b>										
X	100	150	200	300	400	450	600	800	1000	4000
<b>Young Sports professional</b>										
X	x	50	100	100	150	150	150	150	150	1000
<b>Youth4AgriTech</b>										
200	400	600	800	1000	1000	1300	1300	1400	1400	9400
<b>Tech4Change</b>										
100	200	300	400	500	500	500	600	700	700	4500
<b>Youth Skilled and Placed</b>										
4000	5000	6000	6000	6500	7000	7500	8000	8500	9000	67500

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
<b>Young Professionals</b>										
50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
<b>Media4Change</b>										
50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
<b>Youthpreneurship</b>										
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	10,000
<b>Total</b>										
5400	6900	8400	8900	9900	10650	11600	12500	13600	14550	102400

CYDA plans to engage with youth through three consecutive levels. 'Reach out' refers to the number of youth engaged as a part of its broad audience. Influenced measures the depth of the organization's impact, assessing the number of youth whose attitudes, skills, and behaviors it has been able to shape. 'Excelled' refers to the number of youth participants of CYDA's programs who have excelled in personal growth, leadership, or professional development.

**10.6 CYDA's Values:** Since its inception, CYDA has been rooted in core values such as human rights, gender equity, secularism, social justice, and good governance. These principles have guided our mission, strategic objectives, interventions, and overall functioning. Our decision-making processes, organizational culture, and daily operations reflect these principles. In revising our strategic plan for the next ten years, we thoroughly reviewed our core values. We carefully reassessed each value to ensure its alignment with our vision and the current social context. This process confirmed that our foundational values remain relevant and appropriate for the present scenario. Therefore, we will continue to emphasize and uphold previous core values for this strategic plan. These include human rights and gender equity, democracy and plurality, accountability, and transparency.



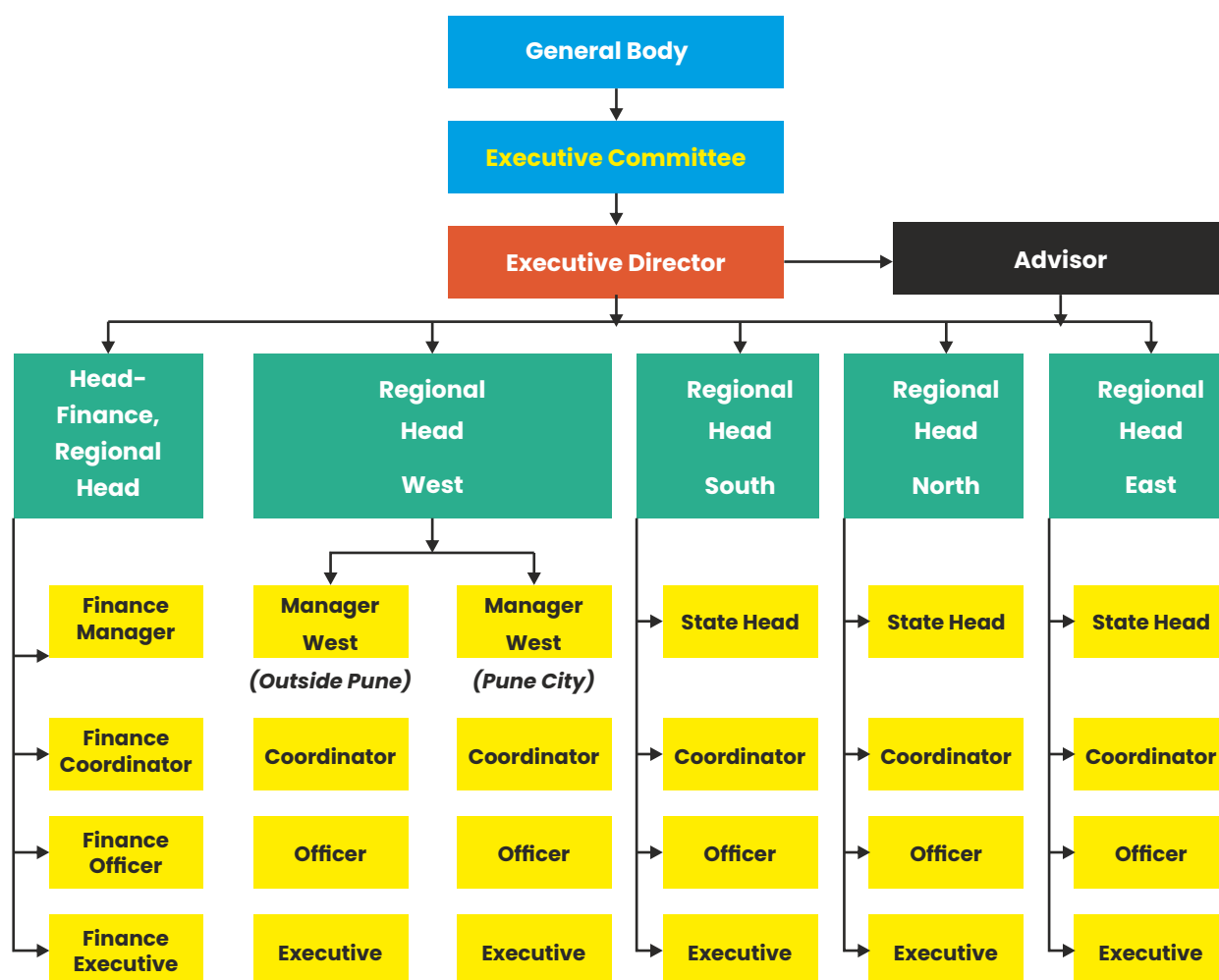
## 11. CYDA staff

CYDA's team includes its full-time team members who adhere to all organizational procedures and contribute to the core functions of CYDA, and full-time or part-time consultants engaged by each unit to ensure adequate specialized input is provided to the team. CYDA is supported by its volunteers who work on specific programs and tasks as needed, interns who are involved with full-time staff on programs, and students from educational institutes or organizations placed at CYDA for hands-on learning and professional development.

### 11.1 Organizational Structure

#### 11.1.1 Collective Leadership

CYDA's leadership will transition to a collective leadership model, starting on 1st April 2025, where decision-making will be collaborative and distributed among Senior Management Team instead of being concentrated in one leader. The aim is to promote inclusivity, shared responsibility and ownership, collaborative decision-making, innovation, and incorporation of diverse perspectives.



## Key Leadership Positions

- **Executive Director:** Oversees overall operations and ensures alignment with CYDA's vision and mission.
- **Heads Regions:** Four Managers will be appointed for the four regions North, East, West, South.
- **Head Strategic Alliance and Partnership:** Leads external partnerships, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative efforts to expand CYDA's influence and reach.
- **Head, Admin and Finance:** Manages administrative and financial functions, ensuring compliance with legal, statutory, and audit requirements.
- **District/City Manager:** A Manager will be appointed for the Intensive locations.

Each Head will be supported by a team comprising managers, coordinators, officers, and executives, ensuring smooth implementation and support across all operational areas.

### 11.1.2 Manager and Specialist

To ensure the smooth functioning of each unit within the organization, it is essential to have both a manager and a specialist. The manager's role encompasses supervising the program, overseeing the implementation of activities, and managing relationships with partner organizations. This position ensures that all operational aspects are effectively coordinated and aligned with organizational goals. The specialist, on the other hand, brings in-depth expertise and knowledge of the subject matter. This role is crucial for guiding the team, enhancing their understanding of the domain, and ensuring that the unit's activities contain the latest insights and best practices. The manager and specialist work together to ensure that each unit operates efficiently and effectively, driving progress and achieving organizational objectives.

### 11.1.5 Learning and Development Unit

During this strategic period, CYDA would like to introduce the Learning and Development unit. The Learning and Development (L&D) Unit aims to build a high-performing workforce by nurturing talent, fostering continuous learning, and developing professional competencies. This strategy will guide the L&D unit's efforts to align with organizational goals while ensuring the growth and development of all categories of personnel- staff, interns, placement students, and volunteers.

CYDA will focus on developing English communication (spoken and written), IT and social media proficiency, youth-centered program design, leadership and management skills, fundraising expertise, problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, documentation and writing skills, advocacy, and networking skills among its staff. A skill mapping will be done within six months of the approval of this strategic plan.

## Objectives

- Skill Development: Conduct regular skill gap analyses, address skill gaps, and enhance technical, leadership, and managerial competencies through well-designed training programs and continuous learning opportunities.
- Career Growth and Leadership Development: Support long-term career progression within and beyond CYDA and prepare staff for leadership roles by developing individualized career progression plans and regular leadership development programs.
- Succession Planning: Identify and groom high-potential staff members for future leadership roles.
- Performance Management: Foster a culture of continuous performance improvement through feedback, coaching, and mentoring through quarterly evaluations/reviews.

For this purpose, a budgetary allocation for external training, certifications, and development tools will be made. A learning management system will be implemented to manage learning resources centrally. Investment in e-learning resources, professional trainers, and partnerships with educational institutions for specialized learning will be made. The key indicators to map the unit's success will be the increase in staff retention rates, percentage of staff promoted into leadership roles, improvements in team performance, and goal achievement.

### 11.1.6. Monitoring and Evaluation Unit:

CYDA will establish a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit to ensure program effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term impact. This unit will play a critical role in strengthening program design and implementation, enhancing accountability and transparency, and demonstrating measurable outcomes to stakeholders. By systematically evaluating the progress and results of initiatives, the M&E Unit will serve as a cornerstone for informed strategic decision-making and organizational learning.

The unit's core functions include designing and implementing comprehensive M&E frameworks aligned with CYDA's strategic goals. It will establish clear and measurable performance indicators to track program progress effectively. To support this, the M&E Unit will develop robust data collection tools and manage data from various sources. By closely monitoring program activities, outputs, and outcomes, the unit will identify deviations from planned activities and budgets, providing timely feedback to program teams for corrective actions.

Mid-term and final evaluations will assess the overall effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of programs, while detailed impact assessments will evaluate the direct benefits to target beneficiaries. Additionally, the M&E Unit will document lessons learned, highlighting best practices and areas for improvement, ensuring that CYDA's initiatives continue to evolve and deliver meaningful change to communities.

## 12. Fund Raising for CYDA

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CYDA aims to generate a cumulative amount of Rs. 600 crore in the next ten years to achieve the objectives delineated in this strategic plan. The following strategies will be adopted to raise funds.

### 12.1 Building a Strong Fundraising Team and Alumni Network:

- Establish a dedicated fundraising team specializing in cultivating relationships with high-net-worth individuals, corporate donors, and philanthropic foundations.
- Develop an alumni network that fosters long-term relationships with past beneficiaries, encouraging them to contribute as donors or brand ambassadors.

### 12.2 Targeted Proposal Development:

- Focus on creating high-quality, targeted proposals for core programs in youth development, ensuring that these initiatives receive the necessary attention and funding.
- Collaborate with program managers to understand the specific needs of each initiative and craft proposals that align with funders' priorities, particularly for grants.

### 12.3 Digital Fundraising and Crowdsourcing:

- Leverage social media platforms and digital marketing techniques to engage a wider audience through crowdfunding campaigns, Social Stock Exchange, and online initiatives.
- Create compelling stories, impactful visuals, and regular updates to engage donors and keep them connected to CYDA's mission, encouraging repeat donations.

### 12.4 Engaging Corporate Partners and Foundations:

- Conduct targeted research to identify corporate partners and foundations that align with CYDA's mission. Create tailored engagement plans to foster long-term partnerships, ensuring a steady flow of unrestricted and program-based funding.
- Prioritize establishing and sustaining a robust corpus fund to ensure CYDA's financial stability.
- Build partnerships around CSR initiatives, particularly those focused on education, youth development, and empowerment.

### 12.5 Grant Writing and Institutional Funding:

- Identify grant opportunities that align with CYDA's strategic objectives. Develop relationships with grant-making organizations and submit well-crafted, research-based proposals that increase the likelihood of success.

## 12.6 Organizing Fundraising Events:

- Plan high-visibility events such as marathons, fashion shows, and music performances to generate unrestricted funds while raising CYDA's public profile. These events will serve as both fundraising and community engagement opportunities.

By diversifying funding sources and employing both traditional and digital approaches, CYDA will create a sustainable flow of income that supports its mission, allowing for scalable and impactful programs that benefit underserved youth. This comprehensive and strategic approach will achieve the goal of raising Rs.600 crore by 2035. The fund-raising team will ensure a minimum of 5% to 10% to be raised as part of an unrestricted fund. CYDA will create a corpus of 10 lakhs annually starting from March 2025.

### Proposed Fund-Raising Amounts (year-wise)

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
<b>CSR</b>										
20cr	24cr	28cr	32cr	40cr	50cr	59cr	65cr	73cr	75cr	466cr
<b>INGO/FCRA</b>										
3cr	4cr	4cr	4cr	5cr	8cr	8cr	10cr	10cr	10cr	66cr
<b>Unrestricted/Donation</b>										
2cr	2cr	3cr	4cr	5cr	7cr	8cr	10cr	12cr	15cr	68cr
<b>Total</b>										
25cr	30cr	35cr	40cr	50cr	45cr	75cr	85cr	95cr	100cr	600cr



## 13. System Strengthening

It is imperative to establish a solid and robust system in CYDA, keeping in mind the future growth and reputation of the organization. A system risk assessment will be undertaken to identify areas of risk within the organization as part of system strengthening.

### 13.1 Operational Risk Assessment:

- Identify operational risks, including resource constraints, staff turnover, and external factors (e.g., political or environmental conditions).
- Develop contingency plans, cross-train staff to cover critical roles, and implement a plan to handle unforeseen events.
- Continuously track operational Key Performance Indicators (staff performance, resource utilization) and conduct regular internal audits.

### 13.2 Program Management Systems Risk Assessment:

- Potential risks include program delays, misalignment with stakeholder expectations, budget overruns, and ineffective team communication.
- Implement a program management tool to centralize communication, set clear milestones, allocate sufficient resources, and use agile methods for program adjustments. Ensure regular team meetings for timely issue resolution.
- Monitor programs' progress using a centralized system and conduct monthly reviews to address emerging risks early on.

### 13.3 Financial Systems Risk Assessment:

- Risks include fraud, mismanagement of funds, and failure to comply with financial regulations.
- Implement strict financial controls, including segregation of duties, regular internal and external audits, and automated financial reporting systems. Maintain compliance with tax and legal requirements.
- Conduct quarterly financial reviews, ensure compliance with audit requirements, and use financial dashboards for real-time monitoring.

### 13.4 Reputation Risk Management:

- Risks to CYDA's reputation include negative public relations, poor program outcomes, or stakeholder dissatisfaction.
- Maintain transparent communication with stakeholders, ensure high-quality program execution, and prepare crisis communication strategies.
- Regularly review feedback from stakeholders, monitor media coverage, and ensure public relations strategies are in place.

This comprehensive plan ensures that risks in operations, program management, finance, and reputation are identified, mitigated, and continuously monitored for CYDA's success.













## 14. Policies for Effective Engagements

14.1 Policy Statement: CYDA is committed to ensuring strong and effective management systems and policies that enable the organization to thrive during periods of growth and change. The policy framework is designed to maintain alignment across all levels, support decentralization, and ensure the proper governance of resources, human capital, and programs.

Policies ensure consistency in decision-making and operational procedures, promoting transparency and fairness across all branches of CYDA. They protect the organization from legal, financial, and reputational risks by clearly outlining procedures and compliance requirements.

As CYDA expands, policies provide a strong foundation for managing new branches, programs, and funds without compromising operational efficiency. Clear policies hold staff accountable, aligning their actions with organizational goals and legal obligations. Policies empower state and district branches with autonomy while maintaining a unified organizational approach. Policies help ensure compliance with statutory regulations and reduce the risk of legal violations.

### 14.2 Types of Policies for CYDA:

 <b>Human Resource Management Policy</b>	 <b>Media Communication Policy</b>
 <b>Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy</b>	 <b>Health and Safety Policy</b>
 <b>Fraud Mitigation and Anti-Money Laundering Policy</b>	 <b>Data Management Policy</b>
 <b>Finance Policy</b>	 <b>Partnership Policy</b>
 <b>Procurement Policy</b>	 <b>Alumni Engagement Policy</b>
 <b>Child Protection Policy</b>	 <b>Volunteer Engagement Policy</b>

By implementing these policies, CYDA ensures the effective management of its operations, enabling sustainable growth and adherence to ethical standards across all branches and programs.

## 15. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

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CYDA will develop a well-structured plan for planning, monitoring, data collection, and review of program deliverables.

### 15.1 Planning:

- The action agenda for each program will be developed and carefully reviewed from April to June 2025.
- Define clear, measurable goals and objectives for each program, aligned with organizational priorities and grant requirements.
- Establish timelines for program milestones, with monthly, quarterly, six-monthly, and annual checkpoints to track progress.
- Allocate human, financial, and material resources efficiently to meet program goals.
- Develop comprehensive SOPs and Risk Management plans to guide team members and mitigate risks.
- Define and assign specific roles for each team member in the planning and monitoring processes to ensure accountability.

### 15.2 Monitoring:

- Implement an online monitoring tool that collects real-time spatial and program data from all partner organizations to ensure consistency and accuracy.
- Regularly schedule reviews to assess progress against milestones and goals. This includes:
  - Monthly Reviews: Short-term program updates and identification of immediate gaps.
  - Quarterly Reviews: Broader financial and operational performance assessment, alignment with grant requirements, and identification of strategic adjustments.
  - Annual Reviews: Comprehensive evaluation of overall program impact, effectiveness of interventions, and sustainability.
  - Review with Board Members: All Board members will review and monitor the progress of CYDA's programs twice a year. Each Board member will use their expertise to guide the Executive Director and help to improve the organization's performance.
  - Ensure all audits, compliance reports, and risk management protocols are completed and submitted on time. Audits will focus on financial components, operational integrity, and adherence to program goals.

### 15.3 Data Collection:

- Create a uniform data collection tool that all teams will use to capture qualitative and quantitative data across programs. This tool will allow data to be analyzed on a centralized platform.

- Include baseline and endline indicators, financial literacy data, participant demographics, economic status, and spatial data to track program impact.
- Use mobile-friendly tools to capture data from field teams, enhancing data reliability and speeding up collection processes.
- Organize frequent field visits to verify the quality and accuracy of the data being collected.
- Regularly conduct data quality assessments to ensure consistency, completeness, and reliability across different teams and locations.

#### **15.4 Review of Program Deliverables:**

- Conduct weekly or bi-weekly internal meetings across all teams to review the progress, address challenges, and reassign resources if necessary.
- Hold strategic program meetings to align the results from different programs with organizational goals and stakeholder expectations.
- Collect and analyze data from the online monitoring system, focusing on both short-term outputs and long-term outcomes.
- Identify gaps between planned and actual results, allowing for timely corrective actions.
- Develop detailed reports based on the audits, monitoring reviews, and compliance checks. These reports will be shared with grant-making organizations and stakeholders to maintain transparency and accountability.

#### **15.5 Follow-up and Capacity Building:**

- Ensure routine follow-up meetings across programs to track the implementation of corrective actions and adaptations made during reviews.
- Provide training for teams on using the new monitoring and data collection systems, SOP adherence, risk management, and reporting protocols.

#### **15.6 Risk Management:**

- Continuous identification of risks through program reviews and data analysis. Develop real-time mitigation strategies to address any emerging challenges.
- Ensure that all teams are adhering to SOPs and risk management documents. Periodically review and update these documents to reflect changes in the environment or organizational needs.

This structured approach will ensure that the program remains on track, delivering measurable outcomes and meeting grant-related commitments effectively.

Activity	Frequency
Staff activity plan	Weekly
Project team meeting	Weekly
Units meeting	Monthly
One to one meeting of staff with line managers	Monthly
Donor reporting	Monthly or based on MoU
Senior Management Team meeting	Monthly
Program Management Team meeting	Quarterly
Country Management Team meeting	Bi- Annually
Annual staff retreat	Annually
Annual program review	Annually
Funding plan meeting	Annually
Programs closure reporting	Within 30 days of closure of a Programs

### 15.7 Evaluation of the Strategic Plan:

**Mid-Term Evaluation:** CYDA will conduct a mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan in 2030 to assess its feasibility and progress. This evaluation will provide critical insights into the effectiveness of our strategies, allowing us to make necessary changes to stay aligned with our long-term goals. The findings will guide us in refining our approach to ensure the plan remains responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.

**End-Term Evaluation of the Strategic Plan:** CYDA will conduct an end-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan in 2034. This comprehensive review will assess the overall impact and outcomes, helping us understand the long-term effectiveness of our strategies. The evaluation will highlight lessons learned, guide future planning, and ensure our efforts meet objectives.



## 16. Conclusion

CYDA is committed to empowering youth by creating opportunities for them to actively engage in policymaking and development processes. Recognizing the evolving challenges young people face, CYDA seeks to bridge the gap between youth needs and policy responses, ensuring inclusivity and access to resources for all. Our strategic vision focuses on amplifying youth voices, especially those on the periphery, and fostering a society where their input shapes policies. By integrating their perspectives, we aim to create an equitable environment where youth can thrive and contribute meaningfully to nation-building and a more just society.



# Annexure I

The genesis of CYDA's strategic plan is outlined in the following section.

## 1. Journey of CYDA's Strategic Plans

**1.1 First Strategic Plan:** In 2002, the first meeting was held at J. P. Naik Bhavan, where 25 committed individuals spent three days articulating the strategic objectives and choices for CYDA. During this gathering, five critical areas of intervention were identified that laid the foundation for the organization's work. These focus areas included the right to self-expression, right to reproductive health information, right to education, right to livelihood, and right to participation of young people.

**1.2 Second Strategic Plan:** In 2008, CYDA started its second strategic planning journey. Volunteers and staff came together to reflect on the first set of strategic objectives and thoroughly reviewed them to assess their relevance and impact. This process led to the formulation of CYDA's vision, mission, and strategic objectives that would guide its future interventions.

### 1.2.1 Vision

To create an enabling environment in a society where young people can grow into responsible and independent young adults.

### 1.2.2 Mission

- Build the capacities of young people and other stakeholders (parents, community members, government agencies) to meet the evolving needs of adolescents and youth.
- Support policy changes and collective action to realize the rights of young people and other marginalized sections of society.

### 1.2.3 Strategic Objectives

- Prioritize the youth agenda in the country's development sector.
- Promote human rights, social justice, gender equity, and good governance.
- Provide quality information on issues related to growing up and the physical changes experienced by young people.
- Protect rights through collective action.

**1.3 Third Strategic Plan:** The preparations for CYDA's third strategic plan began in August 2013. The exercise involved orienting the team to the strategic planning process, reviewing the organization's work over the past ten years, identifying current challenges and those anticipated in the coming five years, and examining the changes and gaps in the youth sector in India and globally.

**1.4 Fourth Strategic Plan:** The process of CYDA's fourth strategic planning began in April 2019. It involved revisiting CYDA's vision, mission, and objectives to ensure they aligned with the organization's evolving focus and goals. CYDA staff conducted a thorough review of the 2014-2019 strategic plan and used these reflections to shape the new strategic plan for the next five years. The process also ensured the involvement of youth from urban, rural, and tribal areas, reflecting CYDA's commitment to inclusivity and diverse perspectives in shaping its strategic direction.

Over the years, CYDA has expanded from its work in Pune to various states across India. The strategy involved replicating the successful Pune model in new locations while adapting to local needs to remain relevant.

## **2. Preparations for the 5th Strategic Plan**

As CYDA transitions into its fifth strategic plan (2025-2035), we are poised to redefine our mission after 25 years of impactful work. This new phase reflects a comprehensive re-evaluation of how CYDA will address the evolving challenges of a post-COVID-19 era, technological advancements, growing inequalities, and socio-political shifts. Unlike the previous strategic plans, the fifth strategic plan aims to focus on long-term, transformational impact using a ten-year strategy. This will allow for more ambitious objectives, such as systemic change, significant growth, or deep-rooted community development, which takes time to materialize and requires sustained efforts.

The plan focuses on harnessing technology to engage youth effectively, addressing digital divides while enhancing our outreach. It emphasizes organizational transitions, leadership development, and expanding thematic areas, including institution building.

This decade will be crucial for guiding CYDA through leadership changes and aligning its goals toward social transformation. The strategic plan will incorporate feedback from community members, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partners, and government entities, ensuring that our work remains responsive and relevant.

By reviewing policies, strengthening systems, and fostering collaboration, CYDA's fifth strategic plan will solidify our role in youth empowerment, providing a roadmap to sustain impactful outcomes for over one million young people across India.

**2.1 Step One- Review and Reflection:** The review and reflection process were conducted across multiple locations with the team to get diverse insights and a more comprehensive evaluation. This approach ensured that the team could engage in meaningful discussions, reflect on progress, and assess areas for improvement, ultimately strengthening the organization's future interventions.

### **2.1.1 Looking Back Exercise**

From 27th to 28th April 2024, the first step of the looking back exercise took place at the Manshanti Skill Center in Indapur, Maharashtra. This gathering brought together 45 core team members from across India for a comprehensive review of CYDA's journey. The session assessed CYDA's achievements, challenges, and growth areas during the last strategic period. By revisiting key milestones and identifying setbacks, the team laid a strong foundation for shaping the organization's future direction. This reflective process was crucial in setting the stage for the next steps in CYDA's strategic planning.


In Chhattisgarh, the team engaged in similar reflective exercises to ensure a thorough evaluation of CYDA's impact and progress across different regions. This inclusive review process helped identify both successes and areas where improvements are needed and also helped to set the stage for informed strategic development.

### **2.1.2 Engaging with Spin-off Entities**

To foster stronger collaboration and maximize the collective impact of CYDA and its spin-off organizations, a unified approach focusing on shared learning and resource optimization is essential. The 4th Strategic Plan had outlined the shift towards a youth-centric focus, driving the formulation of autonomous entities like Youth Aid Foundation (YAF) and Youth Aid Global Services Pvt Ltd. (YAG). Moving forward, a collaborative action plan can leverage these entities' strengths by pooling their resources and knowledge under a common umbrella, ensuring both cost-efficiency and more profound learning opportunities. This will involve developing integrated services that address key social challenges while retaining the specialized contributions of each entity. By creating a platform for collective dialogue and strategic alignment, these organizations can work harmoniously, enhancing their collective capacity to drive social transformation. This coordinated effort will consolidate existing achievements and open avenues for scaling impactful interventions, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

**2.2 Step Two- Collaborative Discussions:** The second phase took place in Pune from 13th to 15th June 2024 and involved a collaborative dialogue with various stakeholders. This phase was crucial for identifying significant issues and challenges that must be addressed in the coming years. Stakeholders, including government officers, CSR partners, experts, and team members, contributed diverse perspectives to ensure that the strategic plan is comprehensive and aligns with both CYDA's and stakeholders' visions.

On the first day, stakeholders engaged in a meaningful discussion addressing key topics such as CYDA's vision for the next ten years, its role in community engagement from a CSR perspective, and strategies to strengthen community development. The focus was on



incorporating ground-level insights to craft CYDA's next strategy and enhance its constructive community involvement. On the second day, experts from both public and private sectors discussed CYDA's role in contemporary education, the significance of youth in India, the need for inclusion and diversity, and the perspectives of youth and parents. On the third day, well-wishers and influencers of CYDA conducted a deep, insightful discussion on India's socio-cultural dynamics and how CYDA can inspire the nation's youth.

Throughout these sessions, stakeholders extensively examined CYDA's strengths, areas for improvement, and emerging issues. The panel highlighted CYDA's strengths as a pioneering organization dedicated to the comprehensive development of youth. They emphasized CYDA's inclusive and dynamic approaches that adapt to the evolving needs of young people. Its commitment to innovation and new interventions has been crucial in addressing contemporary challenges. With a strong grassroots presence and deep community engagement, CYDA has built trust and fostered meaningful connections across diverse communities. The organization's effective disaster response initiatives and the establishment of CRCs and YRCs have further solidified its role as a leader in driving social change and empowering youth.

The panelists mentioned that despite India being a youth-centric country, few organizations focus on their holistic development. The discussions highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescents and youth and identified emerging challenges such as unemployment, skill deficit, gender discrimination, mental health issues, health and nutrition, the negative influence of social media, and addiction.

Experts provided numerous actionable recommendations to integrate into CYDA's strategic plan. These suggestions have been critically reviewed and incorporated into CYDA's ten-year strategic plan to address young people's needs effectively.

**2.3 Step Three- Ideation Phase:** From 30th to 31st July 2024, the ideation phase was held at Manushki, Yerawada, Pune, bringing together senior and core members of CYDA to deliberate on the strategic choices that will shape the organization over the next decade. During these two days, the team engaged in focused discussions to define the path forward for CYDA.

A comprehensive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) was conducted by the team, carefully considering the current social and economic landscape in India as well as global trends. This exercise was crucial in laying the groundwork for CYDA's strategic direction over the next ten years, ensuring alignment with the organization's vision and mission.

**2.4 Step Four- Envisioning process:** On 3rd September 2024, the Envisioning Process took place at Atur House, Pune, where key members of CYDA, including the Founding Member, Secretary, Executive Director, and Directors reviewed and discussed the outcomes of the recent strategic planning discussions. The session centered on evaluating and integrating the findings into a cohesive vision for CYDA's future.

During this process, the team employed the '7S' Framework, a comprehensive tool used to analyze seven critical elements of an organization: structure, strategy, systems, skills, style, staff, and shared values. This Framework thoroughly examined how each element aligns with CYDA's mission and objectives.

The evaluation yielded valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement within CYDA. It highlighted opportunities for optimizing program efficiencies, enhancing organizational effectiveness, and fostering growth. By critically assessing these elements, the team identified actionable strategies to strengthen CYDA's internal processes and align its resources with long-term goals.



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