2023

Youth Unemployment and Unemployability in South Africa:

Towards Real Transformation

This report aims to propose a new approach that emphasises opportunities and livelihoods for the youth.



CSR NEWS

INSPIRED KNOWLEDGE

Contents

Editor's Welcome 03
Report Breakdown 04
Readers Roadmap 05
Youth Experts 07
Introduction 08

Overview
THE PROBLEM 09

The Theory Behind The Problem 10
Youth Job Market Comparison with African Countries 12
African Countries Leading The Way 14

Discussion
THE SOLUTION 17

Roundtable on Youth Unemployment and Unemployability 18
Fostering Productivity and Efficacy 19
Unlocking the Potential of Corporate Social Responsibility Partnerships in South Africa 27

Conclusion
THE WAY FORWARD 28

A Powerful Tool in Combating Youth Unemployment 30
Shared Initiatives in Combating Youth Unemployment 31

+ How to read the report

This report was created with greater digital usability in mind. As such, the landscape layout enhances readability on tablets and computer displays, while the digital navigation feature makes it easier to switch between its many parts.



About This Report

Introducing the South Africa Youth Unemployment and Unemployability Report, dedicated to presenting a fresh perspective that centers on youth opportunities and sustainable livelihoods. The report sheds light on the critical challenge of youth unemployment and joblessness in the country. Our extensive research reveals that small businesses face difficulties in retaining young employees, primarily because of their insufficient foundational skills.

Despite substantial funding directed towards youth programmes, the rate of youth unemployment persists in its upward trajectory. In response to this pressing issue, the report puts forward the valuable insights of Professor Steven Friedman, focusing on effective management of youth job creation through CSI programmes. Additionally, the report offers innovative ideas for new programmes and projects that merit consideration in tackling this urgent matter.

Welcome

Acknowledging the pressing issue of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa, CSR News conducted an extensive investigation into the collective youth programmes, projects, and initiatives in the country. Our research revealed that numerous small businesses struggle to retain young employees due to their lack of fundamental skills.

Through in-depth interviews with executives, experts, industry leaders, and our own experiences within the CSR News team, it became evident that the situation for the country's youth is dire. To address this urgent matter, we conducted further research specifically targeting youth unemployment and unemployability.

Despite significant funding allocated to various youth programmes over the past two decades, our findings indicated a persistent rise in the youth unemployment rate, reaching as high as 63% in the last decade. Recognizing the need for a fresh approach, our research led us to the insights of Professor Steven Friedman, who provided valuable guidance on effectively managing youth job creation through CSI programmes or projects. In this first phase of our programme, we have partnered with youth experts from Cell C, Old Mutual Insure, Coca-Cola South Africa, the National Youth Development Agency, and Safer South Africa. A round table was convened, inviting these experts to delve into the realms of youth employment and unemployment. During these sessions, Professor Steven Friedman emphasized the significance of creating livelihood opportunities for young people, rather than solely focusing on job creation. For instance, he highlighted research demonstrating that government grants awarded to young women stimulate economic activity in townships as they utilise the funds for entrepreneurial ventures. He also suggested exploring the informal economy as a catalyst for creating opportunities for young individuals.

This report aims to examine different aspects of addressing youth unemployment and enhancing employability through corporate and CSI initiatives in South Africa, while also highlighting successful models implemented in other African countries. Our objective is to develop an effective South African model that combats youth unemployment and provides youth with the prospects of employability. Based on our findings, we will provide recommendations and continue to monitor youth programmes and projects across the country. Ultimately, our goal is to onboard two new corporate partners within a year and establish a national flagship programme focused on advancing youth livelihood programmes.



Simphiwe Mtetwa
Editor-In-Chief
CSR News



THIS REPORT IS DIVIDED INTO THREE FRAMES

Frame 1: (Overview – The Problem)

1. **We will examine the current state of youth unemployment in South Africa.**
   a. We will compare our situation to other African countries.
   b. We will explore successful solutions from African countries that are driving youth job creation or livelihood stimulation.
   c. We will look at The South African Government policies and programmes and what these mean to the overall agenda.
   d. We will suggest solutions to address the issue of youth unemployment.

Frame 2: (The discussion – The Solution)

2. **We will analyse the roundtable discussions that took place.**
   a. We will provide an overview of the discussions.
   b. We will highlight the suggestions made by the experts.
   c. We will examine current youth programmes and initiatives proposed by the experts.
   d. We will suggest solutions based on the discussions.

Frame 3: (Way Forward)

3. **We will conclude the report by:**
   a. Outlining the way forward.
      i. We will highlight and amplify how this programme will be kept as a living document.
      ii. We will explore the development of a national youth flagship programme powered by corporates and what that means.
         - The resources required.
         - The process required.
      iii. We will provide recommendations and closing remarks.

+ ARTICLE INSIGHTS

The article insights presented in this report encapsulate the key concepts that emerged during the Youth Unemployment and Employability Roundtable discussions. They offer a multifaceted perspective on the challenges faced by young individuals seeking employment and provide potential solutions to address these issues comprehensively. Each article insight in this report reflects a particular theme or subtopic related to youth unemployment and unemployability. The insights cover areas such as skills development, education reforms, entrepreneurship, government policies, industry collaboration, and youth empowerment. By exploring these diverse perspectives, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the complex nature of youth unemployment and the potential strategies to tackle it effectively.The article insights presented in this report were born from the rich discussions of the Youth Unemployment and Employability Roundtable. They represent a collective effort to approach the issue of youth unemployment and unemployability holistically. This report serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders who are dedicated to addressing the challenges faced by young individuals in the job market and fostering their successful transition into employment.

This report aims to challenge existing mindsets and inspire collective reconsideration of social development and our respective roles within communities.



Youth Unemployment and Unemployability

Brief Report on Reader's Roadmap Explained



Abstract of this report explained.
The abstract of this report highlights the issue of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa. Despite significant funding allocated to various youth programmes over the past two decades, the findings indicate a persistent rise in the youth unemployment rate, reaching as high as 41% in 2010 to 63% in 2023. The report aims to propose a new approach that emphasizes opportunities and livelihoods for the youth.

What are the contributions of this report?
The contribution of this report is to shed light on the underlying causes of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa, explore successful models implemented in other African countries, and propose a new approach that emphasises opportunities and livelihoods for the youth. The report aims to develop an effective South African model that combats youth unemployment and provides youth with the prospects of employability. Based on the findings from the roundtable, the report provides recommendations and continues to monitor youth programmes and projects across the country.

What data has been used in this report?
In this report, informal research was conducted and therefore we did not develop a model for specific data sources used in the research. However, we did conduct research and in-depth interviews with executives, experts and industry leaders. The report consulted key youth experts and professionals from corporate social responsibility to gain diverse perspectives. Additionally, the report highlights the persistent rise in the youth unemployment rate, reaching as high as 63% in the last decade, indicating that some statistical data was used to support the research.

Limitations of this report.
The report does not explicitly have limitations. However, it is important to note that the research was conducted through in-depth interviews with a limited number of executives, experts, industry leaders, and youth experts from the corporate social responsibility and corporate sectors. Therefore, the findings may not be representative of the entire population or all perspectives on the issue of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa. Moreover, this report does not provide a detailed methodology or data sources used in the research, which may limit the transparency and replicability of the findings or outcome.



Practical implications and future works of this report

The practical implications of this report are significant for various stakeholders, including policymakers, corporates, civil society organisations, and young people in South Africa. This report highlights the urgent need to address the issue of youth unemployment and unemployability in the country and provides insights into effective strategies and solutions. The recommendations and future works suggested in the report can help stakeholders to:

- Develop and implement effective youth programmes and initiatives that focus on creating livelihood opportunities for young people.
- Foster an enabling ecosystem for start-ups and SMEs to lead to positive results in youth employment and economic development.
- Align training programmes with industry needs and promote apprenticeships, internships, and learnerships to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical workplace skills.
- Explore the informal economy as a catalyst for creating opportunities for young individuals.
- Onboard corporate partners to support youth programmes and projects across the country.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of youth programmes and initiatives to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.
- Provide education and awareness programmes aimed at steering youth away from exposure to crime and providing them with positive survival skills as well as preparing them as future leaders.
- Shift the focus from solely striving to create traditional jobs to enhancing productivity and efficacy across various livelihoods.
- Embrace technology, foster entrepreneurship, diversify livelihood options, invest in education and skills development, promote collaboration, and support social safety nets.

Overall, the practical implications of this report are to provide a roadmap for stakeholders to address the issue of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa and to create a brighter future for young people in the country.



Youth experts on youth unemployment and youth unemployability

EXPERTS



Steven Friedman

Steven Friedman, a Political Scientist at the University of Johannesburg, focuses on South Africa's transition to democracy and its relationship with social inequality and economic growth. He emphasizes the importance of citizen voice in strengthening democracy and promoting equality. Friedman's notable works include "Building Tomorrow Today" and "Race, Class and Power: Harold Wolpe and the Radical Critique of Apartheid." He also contributes to Business Day's weekly column discussing political and economic developments.

Lethiwe Hlatshwayo

Lethiwe has extensive experience in Group Communication, Marketing, and Investor Relations, having held senior roles in Barloworld, Avusa Ltd, Prism Technologies, Siemens, and Nestlé. She has served on various boards, including Board Chairperson, Barloworld Siyakhula, Airport Media, and Boo! Alternative Media. Lethiwe has a Master of Business Administration from Wits Business School and a Bachelor of Commerce degree from UNISA.

Antonia Oakes

Antonia Oakes is a CX influencer, practitioner, and thought leader in the financial services industry. She is a Non-Executive Director of CXSA and a trustee for the Wild Hearts Foundation and M&F Community Trust. With 16 years of experience, she has operationalized and designed CX strategies within corporations to contribute business value. Oakes holds academic qualifications from ABSA Leadership Programme at UCT, University of Witwatersrand, and IISA insurance qualifications.

Riah Phiyega

General Mangwashi Victoria "Riah" Phiyega, CEO of the Safer South Africa Foundation, believes addressing inequalities and high crime rates requires collaboration between police, communities, and stakeholders. With a diverse background, including Deputy Chairperson of Polmed Medical Aid Scheme and National Commissioner of the South African Police Service, Phiyega has held leadership positions in various sectors. She holds multiple degrees and completed executive development programmes globally.

Kabelo Mohono

Kabelo Mohono is a leader with expertise in corporate social responsibility and community engagement, excelling in designing and executing successful CSI programmes. He conducts needs assessments, identifies social issues, and develops tailored initiatives. He values data-driven decision-making and utilizes robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Kabelo contributes to an equitable and inclusive society through analytical thinking, creativity, and empathy.

Walter Bango

Walter Bango is the Senior Manager at the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), overseeing corporate strategy and planning. He manages performance management, monitoring, and strategic plans. He collaborates with youth-related stakeholders to implement nationwide youth development initiatives and advocates for increased programmes from the private sector and government departments. Walter's expertise lies in assembling comprehensive information on corporate planning and monitoring youth-oriented programmes.

Nelisiwe Nzimande

Nelisiwe Nzimande is the Senior Manager at the National Youth Development Agency's Operations Unit, overseeing strategic programs like economic development, skills and education, and special projects. She ensures innovative offerings, maintains relevance, and boosts young people's economic participation. Nzimande balances quality control, internal consistency, and external value while collaborating with public and private sectors to maximize resources.

Introduction

The persistent challenges of youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa have prompted a comprehensive examination of the issue. This report aims to shed light on the underlying causes, explore successful models implemented in other African countries, and propose a new approach that emphasizes opportunities and livelihoods for the youth. By collaborating with key stakeholders, including renowned experts and influential companies, we seek to drive real transformation within the corporate social responsibility (CSR) industry.

KEY FACTS

This report offers a critical examination of the challenges surrounding youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa. By highlighting the skills gap, alarming statistics, and the need for a new approach, we aim to inspire a transformative shift in addressing these issues. The collaborative efforts of esteemed experts and influential companies pave the way for a more holistic and effective approach to youth empowerment and sustainable change.

1. **Skills Gap and Job Retention Challenges:**
   - Many organisations struggle to retain young employees due to a mismatch between the skills possessed by youth and the requirements of available jobs.
   - Despite providing training programmes, some individuals are still unable to qualify for positions, leading to difficulties in job retention.

2. **Alarming Youth Unemployment Statistics:**
   - Youth unemployment rates in South Africa have been steadily increasing, with an annual rise ranging from 2% per annum.
   - Traditional approaches, including funding various youth programmes and projects, have not effectively addressed this growing issue.

3. **Research and Expert Involvement:**
   - Extensive research was conducted, with a particular focus on the insights provided by Professor Steven Friedman , an esteemed authority - Research Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Politics Department - University of Johannesburg and an expert on youth unemployment and unemployability.
   - Key youth experts and professionals from the corporate social responsibility and corporate sectors including, Cell C, Old Mutual Insure, Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa, NYDA, Safer South Africa were consulted to gain diverse perspectives.

4. **Need for a New Approach:**
   - The existing framework for addressing youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa requires a thorough re-evaluation.
   - The report proposes a paradigm shift towards creating opportunities and livelihoods for the youth, rather than solely focusing on job creation.

5. **Collaborative Efforts:**
   - Prominent companies, including Cell C, Old Mutual Insure, Coca-Cola South Africa, and the National Youth Development Agency and Safer South African have joined forces with CSR News to tackle this pressing issue.
   - Their participation underscores the collective commitment to finding real solutions and driving meaningful change.

6. **Grants as Catalysts for Economic Activity:**
   - Grants serve as potential to stimulate economic activities in townships.
   - Professor Steven Friedman suggests exploring the role of these grants as tools for empowering young women to engage in entrepreneurial endeavours.

7. **Comparative Analysis:**
   - Successful models implemented in other African countries, such as Rwanda, Morocco, Ghana and Kenya, provide valuable insights for addressing youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa.
   - By analysing these models, we can identify strategies that can be adapted to the local context and contribute to positive outcomes.

8. **Future Outlook:**
   - The report concludes with directives formulated during the collaborative meeting.
   - Over the next twelve months, CSR News will monitor and help amplify the discussions, aiming to expand the involvement of additional corporates and establish a national flagship programme with the support of partners who were in the room.



+ Overview

The Problem

FRAME 1

The Theory Behind This Report And How CSI Should Rewire Its Thinking In Order To Create Opportunities



Rethinking Employment and Economic Opportunities: Moving Beyond Traditional Paradigms

In a thought-provoking session, we explored the nuances of exclusion, challenges of youth unemployment, and the concept of market dynamics. Our conversation shed light on the need to reassess conventional approaches to employment and economic opportunities. By examining the shifting landscape and acknowledging the realities of our society, we can strive for more inclusive and sustainable solutions.

Traditional perspectives on employment revolve around replicating the job market of the 1960s, where individuals, primarily white and physically able, secured stable jobs in offices, shops, or factories. However, this outlook fails to consider the fundamental changes that have occurred over the past five decades. South Africa, like many other countries, has experienced a decline in job availability. Even with robust economic growth, it becomes increasingly challenging to generate sufficient employment opportunities to meet the demands of a growing labour market. Moreover, the global scenario reveals a shift away from the traditional jobs sought after in the past. The focus now lies in enabling individuals to sustain themselves and contribute to the economy through diverse means, as traditional jobs are becoming scarcer worldwide. It is crucial to recognise the distinction between livelihoods and jobs. Livelihoods encompass the various ways individuals support themselves and their families, ranging from microenterprises to informal street vendors. **In South Africa, the majority of people rely on livelihoods rather than formal employment.** Therefore, the central question becomes: How can we enhance the productivity and efficacy of these livelihoods, instead of striving to create millions of jobs that may no longer exist?

The Boys Club and Exclusivity:
Reflecting on the socio-economic landscape post-1994, we must acknowledge that the exclusive club that dominated power in South Africa was predominantly white. However, the transformation brought new members into the fold, creating a more diverse yet exclusive club. Those who derive income from the formal economy, such as wages, salaries, and profits, constitute the club's insiders. Unfortunately, this leaves two-thirds of the population outside this privileged circle, marginalised and unheard. Overcoming the vestiges of the past requires dismantling the structures that perpetuate the imbalance of power and privilege. While legal changes aimed to address historical injustices, they alone cannot eradicate the systemic barriers that hinder economic empowerment. Achieving true equality necessitates the equal application of standards, not the replication of past privileges for all. The current economic system must be reimagined to provide equal opportunities for everyone, rather than upholding the advantages of a select few.

Social grants have long been subject to misconceptions and prejudices, often propagated by those who do not rely on them. Critics argue that grants foster dependency and even suggest that individuals deliberately have children to access these benefits. However, empirical evidence reveals a different reality. Social grants, rather than perpetuating reliance, have the potential to stimulate economic activity among those without formal jobs.

Grants act as a catalyst, offering recipients the means to initiate economic endeavours and contribute to local economies. For instance, communities have witnessed the transformation of town centres from queues of job-seeking men to bustling marketplaces, where craft vendors and food sellers thrive. This positive outcome can be attributed to the economic impetus provided by social grants. Rather than viewing grants as a burden on the system, they should be seen as an investment in sustainable livelihoods and local economies.

Looking beyond South Africa, the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) has gained attention globally. UBI experiments have been conducted in various regions, exploring the idea of providing citizens with a regular income to stimulate economic activity. While the viability of UBI requires careful consideration, the evidence from social grants in South Africa indicates that these initiatives can be part of the solution, rather than the problem.

Our discussion challenged long-held assumptions about employment, exclusion, and the role of social grants in society. By recognising the limitations of striving for an outdated job market and embracing the potential of diverse livelihoods, we can chart a path towards inclusive growth and economic empowerment. Acknowledging the exclusivity of established systems and working towards a more equitable distribution of opportunities will be essential for realising a fairer and more prosperous future for all South Africans.



The Human Cost of Youth Unemployment in South Africa: Unveiling the Long-Term Consequences

Youth unemployment in South Africa carries a heavy toll on individuals, families, communities, and the nation as a whole. Beyond the economic implications, the human cost of this issue is profound, affecting the well-being, aspirations, and potential of millions of young people. This article shines a light on the human cost of youth unemployment in South Africa and explores the potential long-term consequences that could shape the future of the country.

1. **Diminished Opportunities and Lost Potential:**
Youth unemployment deprives young individuals of the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society and realize their full potential. Without access to stable employment, they struggle to gain practical skills, build experience, and develop a sense of purpose. This not only hampers their personal growth but also undermines their confidence, motivation, and aspirations for the future.

2. **Poverty and Inequality:**
Persistent youth unemployment exacerbates poverty and inequality in South Africa. Young people who are unable to secure decent jobs often face financial hardships, limited access to basic necessities, and increased vulnerability to exploitation. The resulting income disparities perpetuate social inequalities and hinder the overall progress of the nation, as a significant portion of the population is excluded from economic opportunities.

3. **Social and Mental Well-being:**
Unemployment can take a toll on the mental health and well-being of young individuals. The prolonged absence of work can lead to feelings of worthlessness, low self-esteem, and depression. Additionally, the lack of productive engagement can contribute to social isolation, strained relationships, and even involvement in negative behaviours or crime. These social and psychological consequences not only impact individuals but also place additional strain on families and communities.

4. **Lost Human Capital and Skills Gap:**
Youth unemployment results in a loss of human capital and perpetuates a skills gap within the South African workforce. The country is losing out on the talents, creativity, and innovation of its young population. Without employment opportunities, young people struggle to acquire the necessary skills and experience demanded by the job market. This skills gap not only hinders individual progress but also limits the overall productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

5. **Brain Drain and Emigration:**
The frustration and lack of opportunities faced by unemployed youth can lead to a phenomenon known as “brain drain” or emigration of talented individuals seeking better prospects abroad. South Africa risks losing its most skilled and motivated young people, exacerbating the skills shortage and hindering the country’s long-term development.

6. **Social Unrest and Instability:**
Youth unemployment can contribute to social unrest, protests, and even political instability. Frustration and disillusionment among unemployed youth may lead to social unrest, as they express their grievances and demand change. This instability can have far-reaching consequences, impacting investor confidence, economic growth, and social cohesion.

The human cost of youth unemployment in South Africa is staggering, with long-term consequences that extend far beyond the individual level. The loss of opportunities, poverty, inequality, social and mental well-being challenges, skills gap, brain drain, and social unrest all threaten the future of the nation. Addressing this issue requires a concerted effort from the government, private sector, civil society, and educational institutions to create an enabling environment for job creation, skills development, and entrepreneurship. By unlocking the potential of South Africa’s youth through meaningful employment opportunities, the nation can foster social inclusion, economic growth, and a brighter future for generations to come.



Youth Job Market Comparison With Other African Countries

Comparing the current job market in South Africa to other African countries regarding youth unemployment and unemployability, and analysing why South African youth face difficulties in finding employment, we can observe the following:

1. **Youth Unemployment Rates:**
   - **South Africa:**

     South Africa has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Africa. As mentioned earlier, the latest available data from 2023 shows a youth unemployment rate of approximately 63% for South Africans aged 15-24.
   - **Other African Countries:**

     Youth unemployment rates vary across African countries. Some countries, such as Nigeria and Tunisia, also face high youth unemployment, with rates ranging from 25% to 40%. However, other countries, like Botswana and Mauritius, have lower rates, often below 20%.

2. **Economic Factors:**
   - **South Africa**:

     The South African economy has experienced relatively low economic growth, which limits job creation. The country faces structural issues such as income inequality, skills gaps, and an overreliance on a few industries. Additionally, South Africa's economic growth has not been able to keep pace with the growing number of youth entering the job market.
   - **Other African Countries:**

     Economic factors vary across African countries. Some countries have experienced stronger economic growth, attracting investment and creating more job opportunities. However, others face challenges such as limited diversification, political instability, or insufficient infrastructure, impacting their job markets.

3. **Education and Skills Mismatch:**
   - **South Africa:**

     Like many African countries, faces a significant mismatch between the skills possessed by youth and the requirements of the job market. The education system often fails to provide relevant and marketable skills, leading to high levels of unemployability. The lack of technical and vocational training programmes which further exacerbates this issue.
   - **Other African Countries:**

     Similar to South Africa, other African countries also encounter challenges in the education system, leading to a skills mismatch. However, some countries such as Kenya, Morocco, Ghana and Rwanda have made efforts to align their education systems with industry needs by investing in vocational and technical training, resulting in better youth employability.

4. **Informal Sector and Entrepreneurship:**
   - **South Africa:**

     The informal sector in South Africa plays a significant role in providing employment opportunities, especially for youth. However, the informality of these jobs often leads to precarious working conditions, low wages, and limited prospects for career advancement and are often looked at as rat-like businesses rather than beacons of opportunities.
   - **Other African Countries:**

     Many African countries have a substantial informal sector, which contributes to employment creation. However, the development of formal sectors, promotion of entrepreneurship, and support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) vary across countries. Countries with supportive policies and infrastructure for entrepreneurship tend to offer more opportunities for youth.

5. **Political and Policy Factors:**
   - **South Africa:**

     Political factors, such as corruption, load shedding, policy instability, and governance challenges, can negatively impact the business environment and deter investment, hampering job creation. In addition, certain labour market policies, including minimum wage regulations, may deter employers from hiring inexperienced youth.
   - **Other African Countries:**

     Political stability and effective governance play a crucial role in creating an enabling environment for businesses and job growth. Countries with stable political environments and clear, consistent policies tend to have more favourable job markets.

However, by examining the experiences of various African countries, it becomes evident that some nations have successfully tackled these obstacles. This article explores the efforts of countries like Kenya, Morocco, Ghana, and Rwanda in overcoming economic disparities and addressing the mismatch between education and marketable skills. By analyzing their policies, programs, and projects, we can gain valuable insights into how these countries have effectively lowered youth unemployment rates and created opportunities for the younger generation.

Comparing African Countries

When comparing South Africa with other African nations, such as Nigeria, Tunisia, Botswana, Mauritius, Kenya, Morocco, Ghana, and Rwanda, it becomes apparent that they face similar challenges in their youth job markets. These challenges often revolve around economic disparities and the mismatch between educational curricula and the skills demanded by the job market. However, despite these shared obstacles, some countries have managed to excel in addressing these issues.

Youth Employment and Skills Alignment

The next section of this article will delve into the African countries that have emerged as leaders in youth employment through effective skills alignment. These nations have implemented strategies that bridge the gap between the skills possessed by the youth and the skills demanded by the job market. By aligning their education systems and vocational training programs with market needs, they have created more opportunities for young people to enter the workforce.

For instance, Kenya has established policies and programs that focus on equipping young individuals with relevant skills, such as entrepreneurship and technological proficiency, which are highly valued in the job market. Morocco has also implemented initiatives to enhance youth employability through vocational training and apprenticeship programs, enabling young Moroccans to acquire practical skills that match industry requirements.

Similarly, Ghana and Rwanda have developed comprehensive programs to address youth unemployment. Ghana's initiatives encompass vocational training, entrepreneurship development, and job placement services, enabling the youth to develop the skills necessary for sustainable employment. Rwanda's efforts involve a focus on technical and vocational education and training, empowering young individuals with the expertise needed to contribute to their country's economic growth.

Conclusion

While youth unemployment remains a pressing issue across Africa, certain countries have made significant strides in tackling this challenge.

By implementing policies, programs, and projects that prioritize skills alignment and bridge the gap between education and the job market, countries like Kenya, Morocco, Ghana, and Rwanda have effectively lowered youth unemployment rates and created more opportunities for their young populations.

By studying these successful examples, policymakers and stakeholders in South Africa and other African nations can gain valuable insights and inspiration for designing effective strategies to address youth unemployment. It is crucial to prioritize skills development and ensure that education systems align with the demands of the evolving job market.

By doing so, African countries can unlock the full potential of their youth, foster economic growth, and create a prosperous future for generations to come.



African Countries Leading the Way in Youth Employment through Skills Alignment

Across Africa, the challenge of youth unemployment is a pressing issue that requires innovative solutions.

Some African countries have recognised the importance of aligning skills and vocational training with the needs of the job market to enhance youth employability. By investing in education reforms, vocational training programmes, and partnerships with industries, these countries have made significant strides in addressing youth unemployment and creating opportunities for their growing populations.

Rwanda: A Beacon of Success

Rwanda stands out as a shining example of a country that has made remarkable progress in aligning skills and vocational training with employment opportunities for its youth. Through the establishment of the Workforce Development Authority (WDA), Rwanda has created a comprehensive system that bridges the gap between education and industry needs. The WDA collaborates closely with employers to design demand-driven vocational training programmes, ensuring graduates possess the skills needed for the job market.

The success of **Rwanda's approach can be seen in the remarkable reduction of its youth unemployment rate, which dropped from 22% in 2011 to 14% in 2021.** By focusing on sectors with high potential for growth, such as tourism, information technology, and manufacturing, Rwanda has created an environment conducive to job creation and economic development.

Morocco: Investing in Technical Education

Morocco has also made significant strides in aligning skills and vocational training with employment opportunities. The country has invested heavily in technical education through the establishment of specialized vocational training centres and institutes. These centres offer programmes tailored to the needs of various industries, including automotive, construction, renewable energy, and hospitality.

Through partnerships with companies, industry associations, and international organisations, Morocco's vocational training programmes incorporate real-world experience, internships, and apprenticeships, ensuring that graduates possess the practical skills sought by employers. As a result, **Morocco has witnessed a notable decrease in youth unemployment, with rates falling from 21.5% in 2011 to 15.5% in 2021.**



Ghana: Empowering Youth with Entrepreneurial Skills

Ghana has recognised the potential of entrepreneurship in driving job creation and economic growth. The country has implemented initiatives to equip young people with the necessary entrepreneurial skills and support their business ventures. For instance, the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP) provides training, mentorship, and funding opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Ghana has also integrated entrepreneurship education into its curriculum at various levels, promoting a culture of innovation and self-employment. By fostering an enabling ecosystem for start-ups and SMEs, **Ghana has seen positive results in youth employment, with the youth unemployment rate declining from 14.6% in 2011 to 12.6% in 2021.**

Kenya: Embracing Technological Innovation

Kenya has leveraged its position as a technology hub to align skills and vocational training with the evolving job market. The country's vibrant tech ecosystem has created a demand for skilled professionals in software development, data analysis, digital marketing, and mobile app development. Kenya has responded by incorporating technology-focused programmes and certifications into its education and training systems. In addition, the government has established tech hubs and innovation centres that provide mentorship, training, and networking opportunities for young entrepreneurs and innovators. By nurturing tech talent and creating a conducive environment for innovation, **Kenya has witnessed a decline in youth unemployment, with rates dropping from 17.3% in 2011 to 13.8% in 2021.**

These examples demonstrate that aligning skills and vocational training with employment opportunities can yield positive outcomes in reducing youth unemployment in South Africa. By focusing on demand-driven programmes, collaborating closely with industries, and fostering entrepreneurial ecosystems, these countries have successfully empowered their youth to thrive in the job market.

The success stories of Rwanda, Morocco, Ghana, and Kenya should serve as valuable lessons for South Africans who are facing similar challenges. Governments, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders must work together to prioritise skills development, adapt curricula to industry needs, and create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship. By investing in the potential of their youth, African countries can unlock a demographic dividend, driving sustainable economic growth and social progress.

African Nations Setting a
Great Example in Tackling Youth Unemployment

ACHIEVING REMARKABLE SUCCESS

MOROCCO

Aligns **skills and vocational training** with employment opportunities.

6% DECLINE

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

21.5% in 2011 ▼ **15.5%** in 2021

KENYA

Kenya has **incorporated technology-focused** programmes and certifications into its education.

3.5% DECLINE

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

17.3% in 2011 ▼ **13.8%** in 2021

GHANA

Ghana has integrated **entrepreneurship education** into its curriculum.

2% DECLINE

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

14.6% in 2011 ▼ **12.6%** in 2021

RWANDA

Rwanda focuses on sectors such as **tourism, information technology,** and manufacturing,

8% DECLINE

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

22% in 2011 ▼ **14%** in 2021

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INSPIRED KNOWLEDGE

+ ARTICLE INSIGHT

Designing Demand-Driven Vocational Training Programmes: Considerations for South African Corporate Social Investment Officers

In today's rapidly evolving job market, there is a growing need for vocational training programmes that align with the demands and requirements of the industry. South African Corporate Social Investment (CSI) officers play a vital role in promoting social development and economic empowerment. By designing demand-driven vocational training programmes, CSI officers can address skills gaps, foster economic growth, and enhance employability prospects for individuals. This insight piece will explore key considerations for CSI practitioners when designing vocational training programmes that cater to the needs of the South African job market.

Conducting Comprehensive Skills Gap Analysis:
Before designing any vocational training programme, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive skills gap analysis. This analysis involves identifying the specific skills and competencies that are in demand within the local job market. Engage with industry experts, employers, and relevant stakeholders to understand the current and future workforce needs. By aligning the training programmes with the identified skills gaps, CSI Managers can ensure that the training offered is relevant and addresses the needs of the industry.

Collaboration with Industry Partners:
To create demand-driven vocational training programmes, close collaboration with industry partners is crucial. Engaging with employers, industry associations, and trade unions allows CSI managers to gain insights into the specific skill sets required for various occupations. Industry partnerships can help in curriculum development, training material design, and even the provision of internships or apprenticeships. By involving industry partners throughout the process, vocational training programmes must be tailored to meet industry demands, ensuring higher employability rates for trainees.

Developing Flexible and Customisable Training Programmes:
A one-size-fits-all approach is not suitable for vocational training programmes. Different individuals have varied educational backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles. CSI Managers should design training programmes that are flexible and customisable to accommodate the diverse needs of trainees. Offering various pathways and modules within the programme enables participants to specialize in their areas of interest and expertise. By incorporating practical, hands-on training and workplace simulations, participants can develop the necessary skills to excel in their chosen professions.

Incorporating Technological Advancements:
Rapid technological advancements have transformed the employment landscape across industries. CSI Managers must integrate technology-focused training modules to equip trainees with the skills needed for the future of work. Introducing emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and digital marketing, can enhance trainees' competitiveness in the job market. It is crucial to stay updated with the latest industry trends and ensure that training programmes remain relevant in an evolving digital world.

Monitoring and Evaluation:
Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure the effectiveness and impact of vocational training programmes. CSI officers should establish mechanisms to measure the outcomes and success of the programmes, such as tracking employment rates and job retention rates among programme graduates. Collecting feedback from trainees, employers, and industry partners is also vital in identifying areas for improvement and making necessary adjustments to optimise the programme's effectiveness.

Designing demand-driven vocational training programmes is crucial for South African Corporate Social Investment Managers in promoting economic empowerment and reducing youth unemployment rates. By conducting comprehensive skills gap analyses, collaborating with industry partners, developing flexible training programmes, incorporating technological advancements, and implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, CSI Managers can ensure that vocational training programmes meet industry needs and empower individuals to thrive in the evolving job market. By aligning training programmes with market demands, South Africa can foster economic growth and improve the overall employability prospects of its youth.

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+ Discussion

The Solution

FRAME 2

Report: Expert Corner Youth Unemployment and Unemployability Roundtable



South Africa is the second largest economy in Africa, Nigeria being the first, and in 2022 South African companies spent R10,9 billion on CSI projects.

Although such a large amount of money is contributed towards education, we have a situation where school leavers and university graduates are unprepared for the economy and the world of work.

Of the 40 million working-age population in Q1:2022, more than half (51,6%) were youth (15-34 years). And the first quarter of 2023 shows that the total number of unemployed youth (15-34 years) increased by 241 000 to 4,9 million while there was an increase of 28 000 in the number of employed youth to 5,6 million during the same period (Statistics South Africa – May 2023). With such a large segment of the population vulnerable to unemployment, addressing the growing issue of joblessness in South Africa is a top priority. The Expert Corner, an initiative of CSRNews, set out to seek a solution.

The roundtable on youth employment and unemployability took place on 23 May 2023 at the Southern Sun in Sandton (previously known as the Holiday Inn). Professor Steven Friedman was the keynote speaker. He identified the start of the rise of unemployment as being in the1970s when new entrants to the economy couldn't find work.

It is important to mention the turmoil in South Africa during that time when the struggle for freedom was spear-headed by the youth. It is therefore plausible to consider that the corporate sector was hesitant to employ these young people as a self-protective measure.

The new democracy in 1994 solved the problem of 90% of the population having no rights but the pressing issue of race was not resolved. The patterns of racism are still present, and the basic structure of the economy has not changed, he says.

"The real problem is that there has not been enough compromise," said Prof Friedman, a political scientist and 'self-confessed academic'. During apartheid most of the population were denied access to the economy and professions to focus on 10% of the population. Corporates have rules to exclude people and BBEE functions to see how many Black people can be squeezed into a white economy.

The way we have thought about things in the last 30 years is that everyone wants to recreate the situation in the 1960s where all White people were employed (unless incapacitated) and all Black people (who managed to escape the Bantustan policy) were employed.

We are therefore asking the wrong questions, according to Prof Friedman. We have to start looking at new ways to solve the problem of youth unemployment. Instead of the current focus on the jobs debate, the unemployment problem could be solved by focusing on livelihoods (other ways of earning a living). There is prejudice against social grants, forgetting the hidden subsidies in the suburbs, yet tons of research shows that these grants are used to earn money, Prof Friedman highlighted the example that whereas in the past there were long queues to work in the mines, now there were long queues to get into the supermarket.

By recognising the scope and viability of entrepreneurship in the informal sector, instead of being embarrassed by it, we can start directing our attention away from jobs to livelihoods.

That requires asking different questions, for example, how can corporate companies become part of the solution and not part of the problem?

What followed was a stimulating discussion. The representatives from Cell C, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Old Mutual Insure, Coca-Cola and the Safer South Africa Foundation responded to Professor Friedman's ideas and the room was filled with the energy of an eagerness to contribute to the task of building a better South Africa.

+ ARTICLE INSIGHT

Fostering Productivity and Efficacy: A Paradigm Shift for Livelihood Enhancement in South Africa

In today's rapidly evolving world, the nature of work is undergoing significant transformation, driven by technological advancements and shifting global dynamics. South Africa, like many other countries, faces the challenge of adapting to these changes and ensuring the productivity and efficacy of livelihoods in the face of potential job displacement. Instead of solely focusing on creating traditional jobs that may no longer exist, it is essential to explore innovative approaches to enhance productivity and empower individuals.

It goes without saying that technology has the potential to revolutionize livelihoods in South Africa. Embracing digitalisation and automation streamlines processes, increases efficiency, and enables individuals to accomplish more with fewer resources. Encouraging the use of digital tools and platforms, such as online marketplaces and e-commerce, opens up new opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Additionally, promoting digital literacy and providing training programmes equips individuals with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Nurturing an entrepreneurial culture is key to driving productivity and efficacy in South Africa.

Encouraging individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures not only creates new opportunities but also empowers them to take control of their livelihoods. Governments and organisations must foster an ecosystem that supports innovation and provides resources such as mentorship, access to capital, and networking opportunities. Emphasizing entrepreneurship education in schools and universities also cultivates a mindset of creativity, problem-solving, and adaptability.

As the traditional job market undergoes changes, diversifying livelihood options becomes crucial. South Africa possesses abundant natural resources, cultural heritage, and a growing tourism sector. I believe exploring avenues such as eco-tourism, agri-business, renewable energy, and the creative arts will generate sustainable livelihoods for individuals. By tapping into these sectors, CSI will harness its unique strengths and create opportunities that align with evolving market demands.Education and skills development play a vital role in enhancing productivity and efficacy. It is essential to invest in education systems that prepare individuals for the changing world of work. Curricula should emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, digital literacy, and adaptability. Additionally, vocational training programmes can equip individuals with specialised skills that are in demand. By fostering a lifelong learning culture, CSI can ensure its workforce remains relevant and adaptable to emerging trends.

Collaboration and networking foster innovation and efficiency. Establishing platforms where entrepreneurs, small business owners, and professionals can connect and collaborate, facilitate knowledge sharing, partnership formation, and access to resources. Incubators, co-working spaces, and industry-specific associations can serve as hubs for collaboration, providing support, guidance, and opportunities for joint projects. By building a strong network of like-minded individuals, South Africans can leverage collective expertise to enhance productivity and efficacy.

While focusing on enhancing productivity and efficacy, it is essential to address potential job displacements and provide support to affected individuals. Implementing social safety nets, such as unemployment benefits, retraining programmes, and income support initiatives can provide a safety net during transitional phases. These measures enable individuals to navigate career transitions, upskill, and re-enter the workforce effectively.

As CSI faces the challenges of an evolving work landscape, the focus should shift from solely striving to create traditional jobs to enhancing productivity and efficacy across various livelihoods. Embracing technology, fostering entrepreneurship, diversifying livelihood options, investing in education and skills development, promoting collaboration, and supporting social safety nets are key components of this paradigm shift. By adopting these strategies, South Africa can position itself as a prosperous future, where individuals have the tools and opportunities to thrive in an ever changing world.

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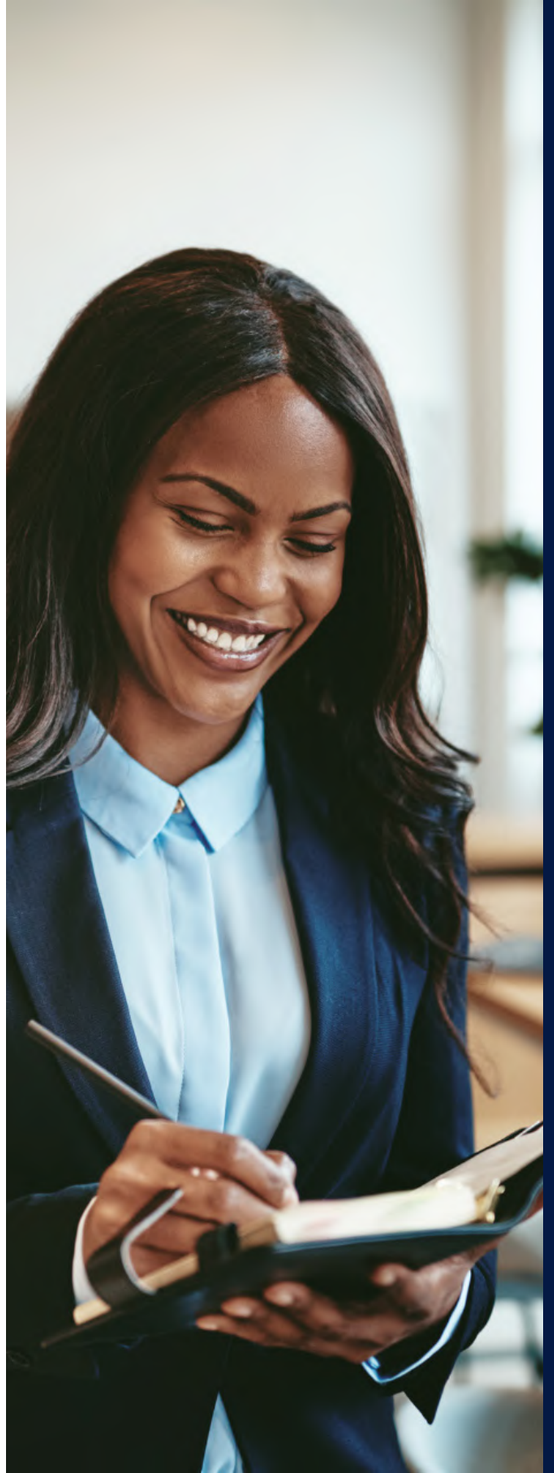

Combating Youth Unemployability in South Africa: Government Initiatives and Policies

Youth unemployability continues to be a significant challenge in South Africa, with high unemployment rates among young people. Recognizing the urgency to address this issue, the South African Government has implemented various initiatives and policies aimed at enhancing youth employability. These efforts encompass education reforms, skills development programmes, and targeted interventions to bridge the gap between education and the job market.
To give a comprehensive youth unemployment and unemployability report we felt it important to provide insight into the key government policies and initiatives in South Africa that tackle youth unemployability head-on.

National Youth Policy 2020-2030:
The South African Government's National Youth Policy 2020-2030 outlines a comprehensive framework to address youth development and employment. The policy focuses on key areas such as education and skills development, entrepreneurship, job creation, and social inclusion. It emphasizes the importance of equipping youth with relevant skills, promoting entrepreneurship, and fostering an enabling environment for youth employment.

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP):
The EPWP is a flagship initiative that aims to provide employment opportunities and skills development for unemployed individuals, including young people. Through various sectors such as infrastructure development, environmental conservation, and social services, the EPWP offers temporary employment, hands-on training, and work experience to enhance youth employability. The programme not only provides immediate income but also equips participants with transferable skills.

National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS):
The NSDS is a long-term government initiative that focuses on skills development to address youth unemployability. The strategy promotes partnerships between the government, employers, and educational institutions to align training programmes with industry needs. It emphasizes the importance of apprenticeships, internships, and learnerships to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical workplace skills.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges:
Recognizing the importance of technical skills, the South African government has prioritized the development of TVET colleges. These institutions offer practical and industry-oriented training in fields such as engineering, construction, hospitality, and information technology. By strengthening the TVET sector, the government aims to provide young people with viable alternatives to traditional academic pathways and enhance their employability in sectors with high demand for technical skills.

Youth Employment Service (YES) Initiative:
The YES Initiative is a collaboration between the government, private sector, and civil society aimed at creating one million quality work experiences for young people over a period of three years. The initiative provides paid internships and learnerships, allowing youth to gain valuable work experience and enhance their employability. It also encourages businesses to actively participate in addressing youth unemployment and fosters partnerships for skills development and mentorship.

Digital Skills Development:
Recognizing the importance of digital skills in the modern job market, the South African Government has prioritized digital literacy and skills development. Initiatives such as the Digital Skills Academy and coding boot camps have been launched to equip young people with in-demand digital skills. These programmes enhance their competitiveness and opens doors for opportunities in the growing digital economy.

Addressing youth unemployability requires a multi-faceted approach, and the South African Government has taken significant strides to tackle this issue head-on. Through policies and initiatives such as the National Youth Policy, EPWP, NSDS, TVET colleges, YES Initiative, and digital skills development, the government is creating a supportive ecosystem for youth employment. However, continued collaboration between the government, private sector, and educational institutions is crucial to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of these initiatives. By empowering young people with the necessary skills and opportunities, South Africa can unlock the potential of its youth, drive economic growth, and foster a brighter future for generations to come.



Ms Lethiwe Hlatshwayo

Executive Head: Corporate Affairs and Communications

This is my third year at Cell C. I'm a mother of two and guardian of one boy. I'm passionate about my work and believe that there should be a balance between business and society. I have a B. Com in Business Management and Industrial Psychology and an MBA which was a game changer because it broadened my mind and my worldview.

When it comes to youth employment there must be a collaboration between private and public entities and civil society, drawing on different strengths, and resources and addressing societal challenges from many different angles as our youth unemployment is a multi-faceted challenge.

Whilst economic growth is critical to creating the capacity to absorb the incoming supply of job-seekers, different players have a role in addressing some facets of helping young people navigate their way towards economic activities and viability to contribute positively to our society. Whilst we are focused on driving the profit motive as a business, Cell C believes in balancing the business and societal compact.

Twenty years ago, Cell C launched the 'Cell C Take a Girl Child to Workday' programme which was a one-day-in-a-year intervention; this was later extended to 2-days in a year. In 2019 Cell C decided to include boys in the programmes.

Though this opportunity exposed the girls to a wider world, some of them went home to child-headed households, gender-based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancy, extreme poverty, and mental difficulties.

Then the question was, by focusing on career development only with 'Take a Girl Child to Workday', which was fantastic when it started, the world had so vastly changed for young people that whatever career they chose, was not the only challenge they had to grapple with. It became clear that focusing on careers only was not feasible and what was needed was to develop young people holistically. There was not just one silver bullet.

In 2022 SEE YOUTH Powered by Cell C was launched to serve as a holistic guide and enabler for young people to navigate life and assist them into adulthood with access to resources that contribute to the different aspects of their development, along with career development, such as social relations, learning, entrepreneurship and wellness, which comprises of physical, emotional and mental health. Young people need help bridging the gap between leaving formalised learning at school and university, and as we have learnt through this session, sometimes there's mismatch in what young people are learning at school and university and what is needed in the world of work. Many do not know some basic life skills, for example, how to create a good CV to send out into the world. Chief among these is technology skills; access to technology is a challenge in some instances.

Today's world of work requires soft skills to survive and thrive, for example, emotional intelligence, how to build resilience, agility and becoming multi-skilled. A pliable mindset is needed to embark on continuous learning, to be greedy for knowledge, to evolve, and to pivot and change jobs when required.

Cell C seeks to address some of these by providing resources that young people can access on the SEE YOUTH zero-rated platform: career profiling, partner workshops and young entrepreneurs' guidance.

We are also initiating the uncomfortable and much-needed conversations around how to raise children in a safe environment, how to deal with violence and how to reach out for assistance to curb the high rate of GBV through various events and podcasts under our SEE YOUTH programme, YouTube and other social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter).

Cell C's initiatives draw on the strengths of different industries and role players.

Our other current partnerships/ programmes to uplift young people are:

- Tomorrow Trust
- Primestars #InItWithYou
- Targeting Talent Programme (TTP) with WITS
- Girl Coder Club
- School Connectivity (digital labs)
- Cell C Bursary Fund
- The Warrior Project, Tears Foundation (to address the high rates of GBV), among others.





nyda
NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr Walter Bango

Deputy President

We are a public entity linked to the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. The NYDA came into being by an Act of Parliament (Act 54 of 2008) with the mandate to oversee youth development programmes and issues such as unemployment at national, provincial and local government levels.

We implement and monitor all programmes according to the Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) which was compiled by the NYDA in May 2022 to head youth development within all sectors of society through collaboration.

Our microgrants support young people who approach us to start a business. It is not like micro-lending because you don't have to pay it back So far it has shown favourable results with 60% of businesses proving to be sustainable.

The NYDA has decentralised to all nine provinces, employing 500 people, making it easier for young people to reach us. Currently, we have 43 branches in all the 52 district municipalities, even deep in the Karroo.

Graduates also approach us for funding which normally ranges from R12 000 to R250 000. Funding is usually available within six months and young people can reapply if necessary.

The NYDA also provides support with training, business plans and marketing in association with the Department of Small Business Development.

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Our microgrants support young people who approach us to start a business.





Mr Kabelo Mohono

Corporate Social Investment Specialist

Our youth programme is run by a social transformation team. We focus on education from Grade 9 to Grade 11 in rural areas and target school leavers or those who want to start a business. Bizniz in a Box, which caters for young people who want to be entrepreneurs, uses the spaza shop as a model.

Bizniz in a Box operates out of shipping containers. It was rebranded to Box2Boss, and dedicated to “investing in and uplifting the township economy”. Prospective candidates must be 24 years and older and have at least one year of entrepreneurial experience. They must also be an active member of the community.

Each successful applicant’s business should address the needs of the local community with products such as internet cafés, car washes, fast-food shops, mini bakeries, convenience stores and chisa nyamas. Skills training in business studies, including financial planning and marketing is provided.

Coca-Cola is helping to improve reliable access to safe water and protecting our water resources in a world affected by climate change by developing access to groundwater with boreholes through partnerships with the government, NGOs, and communities.

We also have a team dedicated to supply development and the capacitation of NGOs. While we mainly focus on education, we have recently started partnering with other stakeholders for a shared initiative.





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Bizniz in a Box, which caters for young people who want to be entrepreneurs, uses the spaza shop as a model.



SAFER SOUTH AFRICA
FOUNDATION

Mrs Riah Phiyega

Executive Director and CEO

The CEO of Safer South Africa concluded the day's proceedings by stating that everyone invested in youth development and employment should move from competition to collaboration.

Mrs Phiyega's NGO provides "education and awareness programmes aimed at steering youth away from exposure to crime and providing them with positive survival skills as well as preparing them as future leaders".

She suggested a National Youth Service Programme with a stipend to gain experience as lack of experience is a major stumbling block to finding work. Social enterprise and access to opportunities should be divided between the youth who live in the rural areas and those who live in the cities.

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Education and awareness programmes aimed at steering youth away from exposure to crime.







Ms Antonia Oakes

Executive Head of Customer Experience & Responsible Business

Old Mutual Insure supports vulnerable communities: the elderly, neglected children, orphaned children, sick children (Reach for a Dream) and the differently abled such as the ITC programme of the Deaf Empowerment Firm's skills development that include learnerships and internships.

We support the Take a Girl Child to Work programme and emergency relief such as the recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal. After the Covid pandemic we aided the survival of small businesses with financial support such as micro-lending and donated to feeding schemes in the township such as the Kasi Hero Foundation.

Our flagship programme in education is providing maths and science support to learners and their teachers to improve their chance of being accepted into university. Most schools opt for math literacy because there is a scarcity of qualified math teachers. We have various partnerships with NGOs. Amongst our key initiatives is the partnership with Ubuntu Pathways facilitating youth skills training in practical, saleable skills such as plumbing and panel-beating. These skills provide entrance into a ready job market as they can also open their own businesses.

However, during the discussion it became clear that there is a tendency to look down on these types of jobs by young people eager to work in an office. This probably requires a campaign to highlight the advantages of acquiring these skills.

Other areas we have invested in are supporting Black female entrepreneurs such as The Alice Lane t/a Mo's Crib, manufacturers of baskets from recycled and natural materials and Call 2 Care (work readiness programme) and Waste ED (waste management).





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Our flagship programme in education is providing maths and science support to learners and their teachers.



Discussion

Examining the expert presentation leads one to believe that there is, indeed, already an effort to build livelihoods.

1. **Firstly,** they are all targeting the youth with various initiatives such as Cell C's SEE YOUTH programme which has a "see you in business" component; the NYDA'S micro-grants and support to start and maintain a business; Coca-Cola's Bizniz in a Box or Box2Boss and Old Mutual Insure's support for Ubuntu Pathway's skills programme.

2. **Secondly,** all the companies who presented their current youth development programmes have already initiated or are moving towards partnerships and collaboration.

3. **And thirdly** there is a tendency to move towards a more holistic approach to solving youth unemployment by taking into account their physical, financial, mental and environmental status. That means an effort is being made to speak to them where they are, in their current life situation, and not where we think or wish them to be.

   This is a shift from the narrative that everyone should have a job which has been the prevailing mantra.

Way Forward

The Expert Corner Youth Unemployment and Unemployability roundtable was a fruitful exercise which suggested a way for future thinking about youth employment in South Africa. Without being aware of what other companies were doing, by coming together and considering Prof Friedman's views, common ground was identified.

The discussions and programmes in the room have highlighted the existing efforts and projects by various partners to drive youth opportunities. The next step is to align these programmes through collaboration, leading to the development of a flagship programme. One example is combining the Cell C youth programme with the grant funding opportunities from the National Youth Development Agency and the Coca-Cola business-to-box idea. By integrating these collaborative partnerships with programmes like Old Mutual's skills development initiatives, such as winter pathways and opportunities in panel beating and plumbing, a comprehensive flagship programme can be designed.

The advantage is that the partners are already present in communities, with Coca-Cola supplying businesses in rural and township economies, and the National Youth Development Agency having branches across the country. The next phase involves utilizing the current frameworks, projects, and programmes to determine the requirements and resources needed for the flagship programme. This includes further collaboration, analysis, and groundwork to create a collective effort in establishing this impactful initiative.

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+ ARTICLE INSIGHT

Shared Value: Unlocking the Potential of Corporate Social Responsibility Partnerships in South Africa

In recent years, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained significant traction across the globe. CSR initiatives have become an integral part of many organizations' strategies, as they recognize the importance of creating a positive social and environmental impact alongside their business operations. In South Africa, where social and economic disparities persist, CSR partnerships that foster shared value have emerged as a powerful approach to address pressing societal challenges while driving sustainable business growth. This article explores the concept of shared value in CSR partnerships and its potential for creating meaningful change in South Africa.

Understanding Shared Value:
Shared value is a concept that moves beyond traditional philanthropy or corporate donations. It emphasizes the importance of integrating social and environmental considerations into business strategies, enabling organizations to create value for themselves and society simultaneously. Shared value initiatives leverage an organization's core capabilities, resources, and expertise to address societal needs effectively. By aligning business interests with social progress, shared value initiatives can generate long-term sustainable impact.

South Africa, with its rich cultural heritage and natural resources, faces a unique set of social challenges. Income inequality, unemployment, access to quality education and healthcare, and environmental sustainability are among the key issues that require urgent attention. CSR partnerships that embrace shared value principles have the potential to address these challenges in a meaningful and impactful way.

Shared value partnerships contribute to economic growth by creating new business opportunities, fostering innovation, and enhancing productivity. Organizations can identify areas where societal needs intersect with their business expertise, products, or services, thereby creating mutually beneficial outcomes. For example, a mining company can invest in skills development programmes to provide job opportunities for local communities while ensuring a skilled workforce for its operations. By doing so, organizations can positively impact the economy while meeting their operational requirements. Shared value partnerships also play a crucial role in promoting social inclusion and empowerment. By collaborating with local communities, NGOs, and government agencies, organizations can address systemic barriers and uplift marginalized populations. Initiatives that focus on education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship development empower individuals and communities to participate actively in economic activities, reducing poverty and inequality. By integrating local suppliers, organizations can further stimulate economic growth and create employment opportunities.

Environmental sustainability is a pressing concern globally, and South Africa is no exception. Shared value partnerships offer a framework for organizations to incorporate eco-friendly practices into their operations while promoting conservation efforts. By adopting sustainable technologies, reducing waste and emissions, and supporting environmental conservation projects, organizations can mitigate their ecological impact. Furthermore, organizations can collaborate with local communities to develop sustainable livelihoods based on eco-tourism or renewable energy initiatives, contributing to both economic growth and environmental stewardship.

To ensure the success of shared value partnerships, it is essential to establish clear metrics and accountability mechanisms. Organizations should set measurable goals aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and regularly assess and report on their progress. Transparent communication and stakeholder engagement are vital for building trust and demonstrating the tangible impact of shared value initiatives.

Shared value partnerships have emerged as a powerful approach to corporate social responsibility in South Africa. By integrating societal needs into business strategies, organizations can address pressing challenges while driving sustainable economic growth. Through these partnerships, South Africa can foster social inclusion, empower marginalized communities, and promote environmental sustainability. As organizations embrace shared value principles and collaborate with stakeholders, they can create a positive and lasting impact, contributing to a more equitable and prosperous South Africa.

+ + +





+ Conclusion

Way forward

FRAME 3

Way Forward

To drive significant social change, it is imperative to reimagine and reconstruct policies from the ground up. This requires a deep examination of the informal settlements and a thorough understanding of the current state of the economy. It is necessary for corporates to contribute to the creation of a new economy, one that accommodates both the informal and formal sectors, while ensuring that the 90% of the population is not confined to the limitations of the 10% privileged minority.

Professor Friedman's analogy of a boy's club illustrates how the existing power dynamics favour the initial members while allowing new entrants, particularly Black individuals, to join with limited influence. The root cause of the job creation challenge lies in the inadequacy of policies and systems designed for the 90% majority. To overcome this, those who have entered the privileged minority must collaborate to establish an economy that fosters the growth of the nation.

Corporate social responsibility practitioners, managers, and activists must unite and reevaluate the concept of corporate social responsibility for the youth. We acknowledge that factors such as job security and reporting obligations can hinder impactful CSR initiatives. Organizations like the Given Group Foundation play a crucial role in providing accountability and executing CSR values on behalf of managers who aspire to make a difference.

In closing, this report emphasizes that opportunities and frameworks exist for adoption. However, a comprehensive understanding of the operating environment is essential before implementing these strategies. Evaluating the tools necessary for this context will guide the creation of programmes that generate real impact.

The limitations of past projects and programmes stem from policies that primarily served the privileged 10% rather than the broader 90% economy of South Africa. By recognizing this reality and truly comprehending its implications, we can begin to drive conscious change.

1. Moving forward, the next 12 months will witness extensive discussions on youth initiatives and programmes within the realm of corporate social responsibility.
2. Research is needed to determine the direction of the South African CSR industry, including ground-level exploration of opportunities and their significance for the youth.
3. New corporates will be invited to join this endeavour, culminating in a national flagship programme that acts as a catalyst for youth opportunities in the informal market. This programme will serve as a benchmark and framework for creating further opportunities.

In light of these recommendations, this report has provided an overview of the programme's origins, insights into African countries, government policies, and the outcomes of the roundtable discussions. It now sets the course for the future direction of this programme.

Those interested in partnering with the programme are encouraged to reach out to us at **editor@csrnews.africa.**

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+ ARTICLE INSIGHT

Shared Initiative: A Powerful Tool in Combating Youth Unemployment and Unemployability in South Africa

South Africa, like many countries around the world, faces the daunting challenge of high youth unemployment and unemployability rates. This critical issue not only threatens the future of the nation but also hampers economic growth and social stability.

However, there is a glimmer of hope in the form of a concept known as shared value, which has given birth to a powerful solution: shared initiatives. These initiatives harness the collective efforts of businesses, governments, civil society organizations, and individuals to create sustainable solutions to address youth unemployment and unemployability in South Africa. In this article, we will explore how shared initiatives can play a vital role in this fight and foster a brighter future for the country's youth.

Understanding Shared Value and Shared Initiatives:
Shared value is a business concept that emphasizes the idea that businesses can achieve financial success while simultaneously creating social and environmental benefits. It recognises that businesses can create long-term value by addressing societal needs and challenges. Shared initiatives are collaborative efforts that bring together multiple stakeholders, including businesses, government entities, NGOs, and communities, to work towards a common goal.





Shared Initiatives in Combating Youth Unemployment:

Skill Development Programmes: Shared initiatives can facilitate the creation of skill development programmes tailored to the needs of the job market.

By collaborating with educational institutions, businesses can provide specialised training and internships that equip young individuals with the skills and experience necessary for employment.

Mentorship and Entrepreneurship Support:
Shared initiatives can establish mentorship programmes where experienced professionals guide and support young individuals in their career paths. Additionally, fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem through business incubators and accelerators can empower youth to create their own job opportunities and contribute to the economy.

Public-Private Partnerships:
Shared initiatives can facilitate partnerships between the government and private sector to address youth unemployment at a systemic level. By aligning policies, resources, and expertise, these partnerships can create comprehensive solutions that bridge the gap between education and employment.

Access to Financial Resources:
Lack of financial resources often hinders young people from accessing opportunities or starting their own businesses. Shared initiatives can promote access to financial resources through initiatives such as microfinance, grants, and scholarships. This enables aspiring entrepreneurs and job seekers to overcome financial barriers and pursue their ambitions.

Industry Collaboration and Job Placement:
Shared initiatives can encourage collaboration among businesses within industries to address the collective challenge of youth unemployment. By establishing job placement programmes, internships, and apprenticeships, these initiatives can connect young job seekers with relevant employment opportunities and facilitate a smoother transition into the workforce.

Benefits of Shared Initiatives:
Collaboration and Collective Impact: Shared initiatives foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders, pooling resources, expertise, and networks. By working together, these stakeholders can maximize their impact and create sustainable solutions that address the complex issue of youth unemployment.

Holistic Approach:
Shared initiatives take a holistic approach by addressing various aspects contributing to youth unemployment, including education, skills development, job placement, and entrepreneurship. By addressing these interconnected factors, shared initiatives can create systemic change and improve the overall employability of South Africa's youth.

Scalability and Sustainability:
Shared initiatives have the potential to scale and sustain their impact over time. By leveraging the resources and expertise of multiple stakeholders, these initiatives can create long-lasting solutions that continue to benefit young people even after the initial intervention.

Youth unemployment and unemployability pose significant challenges to South Africa's social and economic development. However, shared initiatives born from the concept of shared value provide a powerful tool to address these issues.

By fostering collaboration, leveraging resources, and adopting a holistic approach, shared initiatives can create sustainable solutions that empower the youth, bridge the skills gap, and promote entrepreneurship.

With a concerted effort from businesses, government entities, civil society organizations, and individuals, South Africa can pave the way for a brighter future, where every young person has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to the nation's growth.

Suggested National Youth Flagship Programme

Introduction and background
Youth unemployment has been described as a ticking time bomb in South Africa. Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Q1 2023) shows that youth (15-24 & 25-34 years) accounted for the highest unemployment rates (62% & 41% respectively).The lack of jobs in the economy to go around for the millions of young people is one of the attributable factors to the persistently high unemployment. Coupled with this is the phenomenon of "unemployability" which relates to not having the requisite skills to match labour market demands.

Sustainable livelihoods as a solution?
Government and social partners have implemented a variety of programmes aimed at alleviating youth unemployment. However, given the scarcity and/or lack of jobs in the mainstream economy, there has been little success. The CSR NEWS report (June 2023) noted that a paradigm shift is required that focuses on "creating opportunities and livelihoods for youth".

This paradigm shift includes a focus on entrepreneurship to generate income-earning opportunities rather the reliance on "job searching".

A roadmap for sustainable livelihoods
Some of the key recommendations from the CSR NEWS report is the need to:

- Develop and implement effective youth programmes and initiatives that focus on creating livelihood opportunities for young people.
- Explore the informal economy as a catalyst for creating opportunities for young individuals.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of youth programmes and initiatives to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.
- However, to ensure that these recommendations are implemented effectively, a clearly articulated roadmap is required.

The roadmap: Key steps in the process
Although not exhaustive, these are the proposed key steps required in the process

1. Identifying key role players
Part of the process of developing a roadmap will include identifying the partners, their respective roles and interdependencies. Fundamentally there are three main role players in the sustainable livelihoods ecosystem;

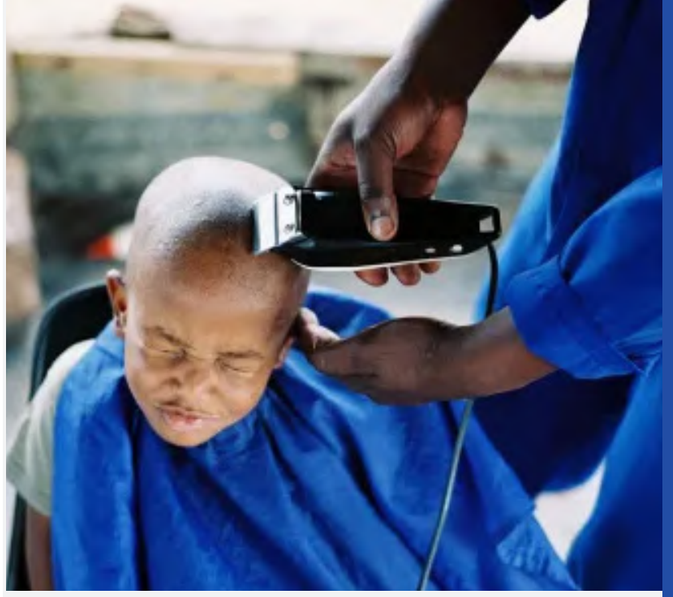
- **CSI Community** – refers to the corporates that will provide funding, mentoring and other support the sustainable livelihood initiatives.
- **Development agencies** – refers to the agencies that may either be independent or linked to government and will either provide funding or other kinds of support to the initiative.
- **Intermediaries** – refers to different service providers who will work with the CSI community to oversee, advise and advocate on behalf of the initiative.
- **Target groups/local entrepreneurs** – the local or township entrepreneurs who will benefit or receive micro or start-up support to create sustainable livelihoods in the communities.

Key role player roles
NB: It is proposed that an advisory committee/ structure comprised of these key role players be established to oversee the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the initiative.

2. Documenting evidence on youth employment initiatives
A landscape study of youth employment initiatives. Little is known about what makes youth employment initiatives work or not.

As such it becomes imperative that before a livelihoods initiative is implemented, proper analysis is done to ensure that the initiative does fall into the same pitfalls. It is thus proposed that a landscape study/analysis be conducted which will cover amongst others the following;





- What youth employment/sustainable livelihood programmes exist?
- Where do these programmes exist and who funds/support them?
- What are the successes and failures of these programmes?
- What lesson can be incorporated into a new flagship programme?

These are not exhaustive but will guide the design of the landscape study.

3. Developing, monitoring and evaluating a flagship programme
It is proposed that the design of the programme be informed by the landscape study, after which an advisory structure must be set up to oversee the development of a national youth programme. It will also be important for the CSI community and development agencies to commit funds from inception to ensure that the flagship programme does take shape.

What would the flagship programme target?

Car Wash with more and more people owning cars in townships, car washes can be a source of livelihood for young people.

Barbershop everyone requires a haircut, barbershops can provide income-generating opportunities for young people.

Shisanyamas provide entertainment and relaxation environments – can also provide a source of livelihood for young people.

Artisanal Hubs – Young people with artisanal skills can create a central hub or business where people can source their skills

An illustrative example: Car Wash
Car washes are cost-effective yet have great potential to provide sustainable livelihoods in the townships. A national car wash franchise model which can be implemented in selected townships is proposed. The franchise model will adopt the principles of a "business franchise" wherein:

- A clear brand name exists/or is developed
- Franchisor owns/develops the concept/brand
- Franchisee "opts" into the brand and follows the standard operating procedures of the franchisor

An illustrative example: Car Wash (Cost categories)

- Setup or start-up costs for a car wash are approximately R100k-R250k depending on brand/packages e.g
- High pressure cleaner
- Wet & dry vacuum cleaner





- Foam Nozzle
- High foaming car wash chemicals

If land and infrastructure exist in the township, other core costs will be refurbishment and/or renovations.

Licensing and registration costs.

An illustrative example: Car Wash (model)
The proposed franchise model will follow these steps:

- Targeting 10 largest townships by province. More car washes in larger townships.
- Conducting an infrastructure/resource availability in each township.
- Determine financing agreement for the franchisees e.g seed or start-up funding, repayment period, T&Cs.
- Provide start-up resource/equipment for the franchisees (prospective franchisees must apply to participate).
- Provide a mentorship and support programme for the franchisees.

An illustrative example: Car Wash (Total indicative costs)
Given that the decision relating to the number of franchises or car washes per township have not been made, it is proposed that a factor of 3 be used per township e.g for large townships, 5 car washes could be established and for smaller ones, 1 or 2 car washes can be established so an average of 3 nationally can be used.

Way forward
The proposed roadmap is a draft for consultation and further discussion – there may be other steps required in the process. It aims to provide initial thoughts and ideas for what a "national youth flagship programme" could look like using a specific example. It will be important that key stakeholders, in particular, the CSI community, deliberate further so that the national programme is properly designed.

Its success will be largely dependent on stakeholder commitment both in terms of financial and non-financial support.

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