



**GAUTENG**  
**LEGISLATURE**  
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## OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON THE PREMIER’S OFFICE AND LEGISLATURE (OCPOL)

**Report on OCPOL Youth Unemployment Workshop on “*Curbing the Youth Unemployment Crisis: Exploring youth intervention strategies for Gauteng*”.**

*In line with the Oversight Model of the South African Legislative Sector “SOM”*

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<b>Hon. Chairperson</b>	Hon BW Dhlamini		
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALMPs	Active Labour Market Policies
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COVAC	Committees Oversight and Accountability Framework
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FY	Financial Year
GCRA	Gauteng City Region Academy
GPG	Gauteng Provincial Government
GPL	Gauteng Provincial Legislature
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NEP	National Employment Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
OCPOL	Oversight Committee on the Premier's Office and the Legislature
PES	Public Employment Services
PwDs	People with Disabilities
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SOM	Sector Oversight Model
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
YETI	Youth Employment and Training Initiative

**11 March 2022**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The youth unemployment challenge has grown out of proportion in Gauteng and South Africa as a whole and it is viewed as a ticking time bomb waiting to explode. In strengthening the oversight function over the Office of the Premier, the Oversight Committee on the Premier's Office and the Legislature (OCPOL) raised concerns since the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration regarding the effectiveness of the Tshepo 1-Million Programme in reducing youth unemployment in Gauteng. The Committee saw the need to be proactive rather than reactive in contributing towards the solution to this problem. In responding to unemployment challenges faced by the youth of the Gauteng province, the Committee conducted a workshop (focused on young people) to find ways of contributing towards the reduction of this scourge.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

Due to limited expertise on youth empowerment, the Committees roped in economic and youth development experts to provide expertise and capacity in translating strategic principles into alternative innovative plans to mitigate the challenge of youth unemployment in the province. Organized youth groups, youth representatives and a pool of young people representing the Gauteng demographics as well as the contribution of some of the GPG departments participated in this workshop, tabling their views on unemployment challenges and employment opportunities. The Committee also involved entities with similar interests and objectives on youth development job creation initiatives as well as businesses to explore ways of reducing joblessness among the youth of Gauteng.

The workshop attracted diverse inputs of participants from different backgrounds in tackling challenges of youth unemployment and their views on employment opportunities. Through this workshop, the objective was to derive alternative solutions to reduce youth unemployment and to transform the lives of this designated group. This engagement enabled the participants to brainstorm issues of concern during the workshop which would form part of the Committee recommendations.

The workshop was conducted under the topic: *"Curbing the youth unemployment crisis: exploring youth intervention strategies for Gauteng"*. Due to lockdown restrictions that allows minimal physical contacts, this workshop was conducted in a hybrid format with participants attending virtually and others physically at the Braamfontein Recreation Centre for two days from Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 under the topic: *"Curbing the youth unemployment crisis: exploring youth intervention strategies for Gauteng"*. In addressing this topic, experts delivered presentations on the following themes:

- *Youth Employment Strategies: A Comparative Analysis*
- *Evaluating Effectiveness of Youth Empowerment Programmes (e.g. Tshepo 1-Million and Youth Unemployment reduction)*
- *Strategies to absorb Youth in the Mainstream Economy as a Way of Reducing Unemployment*
- *Framing of structural factors that drive youth unemployment\Reflections on observations and learnings acquired to improve the outcomes of the Tshepo 1\_Million programme*

The Department of Education (through its GCRA programme), National Youth Development Agency as well as Tshepo 1 million Beneficiaries presented on the following topics respectively:

- *Youth Employment Fund contribution towards youth employment in Gauteng and its link to Tshepo 1-Million to decrease youth unemployment.*
- *National Youth Development Agency's contribution to Youth Employment in Gauteng & its link to Tshepo 1-Million Programme.*
- *Sharing experiences on involvement with the Tshepo 1-Million Programme & the value derived as well as potential areas for improvement.*

Break-away sessions that were conducted assisted in ensuring effective participation of the youth during the workshop and drawing issues of concern and possible resolutions from the participants. The following topics guided the proceedings of the breakaway sessions:

### **Day 1 Break-away Sessions**

- *Employment opportunities in the province that are not adequately pursued by participants.*
- *Challenges and constraints existing in the province that prevent these opportunities from being accessible to participants?*
- *What can be done collectively to ensure that participants are able to access these opportunities and improve youth employment prospects in the province?*

### **Day 2 Break-away Session**

- *How can the underlying factors that causes youth unemployment be addressed?*
- *How can factors that perpetuate youth unemployment be resolved/managed?*
- *How can the existing youth unemployment programmes be upgraded/improved to increase employment opportunities?*

### **3. RATIONALE**

Tshepo 1-Million was established as an intervention strategy to address youth unemployment but the Committee is of the view that the outcome of this programme is not felt at the ground level. This programme looks good on paper but is not producing the intended results. Joblessness is causing depression and disillusion amongst the youth and are turning to drugs and alcohol abuse. The Committee is concerned about joblessness, hopelessness, and the mental state of the youth in South Africa and related suicide rates. The Covid-19 pandemic also exacerbated this challenge, as it has placed everyone in a difficult position.

The rationale for the workshop on youth unemployment with economic and youth development experts as well as youth representatives was amongst others. The aim was to address youth unemployment challenges, developmental and upskilling initiatives that government needs to consider in improving youth employment; identify strategies that could assist in absorbing youth into the mainstream economy as a way of reducing youth unemployment and to assess the impact of Tshepo 1-million.

Furthermore, the workshop aimed to deepen understanding of the plight of the unemployed youth in Gauteng, interrogate issues of concern, explore other alternatives as additional mechanisms to reduce youth unemployment and ultimately formulate recommendations/resolutions to the Office of the Premier for implementation to improve strategies for youth unemployment initiatives and projects/programmes. Furthermore, the workshop shared light and equipped the Committee on the dynamics of youth unemployment as well as the challenges and dangers it poses to the province and the country at large.

#### **Expected Outcome**

The expected outcome of this workshop was amongst others to come up with strategies that will improve existing government programmes/projects on youth employment and other alternative mechanisms to curb youth unemployment. The Committee aims to engage the OoP on the outcomes of the youth unemployment workshop through the submission of recommendations/resolutions and identify strategies to improve the effectiveness of youth employment initiatives and programmes in the province.

### **4. OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATIONS BY ECONOMIC & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPERTS**

#### **a) Youth Employment Strategies: A Comparative Analysis: Mr Ayabonga Cawe, Xesibe Holdings**

The presentation highlighted that youth unemployment challenges are well known, and the burning issues are the resolution of these challenges. It seems much has been done in terms of youth unemployment,

but the problem has always been co-ordination challenges. Even if an agreement is reached on what should be done, the challenge is always about how to execute the solutions of the challenges experienced.

There are many inequalities in South Africa in terms of opportunities, income, and production structures. Jobs have declined even further during Covid-19 lockdown. Youth are discouraged to search for jobs due to among others, lack of bus fare, lack of data, etc. In Gauteng, there are less people in employment than during the 2007-2008 crisis. The proportion of jobs are not growing in line with the population. Even though Gauteng is the economic hub, jobs are not easily available due to the decline in the economy. During Covid-19 lockdown many people were forced out of jobs. The number of qualified people is growing at a higher rate than the economy of the country.

The level of economic inactivity is more pronounced among women than their male counterparts due to care-work women undertake in their households. It is wrong to say young people are unable to get jobs because there is something wrong with them. If 12 months go by of unsuccessful job seeking, it results in structural unemployed. There is a need for government to provide work seeker support through a public service placement system to assist work seekers to get a job or provide incentives for the job search. There is a need to strengthen the industrial, manufacturing, mining, and agro-processing sectors for job creation. Youth who have not completed their matric and those who have not graduated from tertiary schools must go back to finish. Government has bursaries for tertiary education and systems in place to repeat matric for those who have failed.

The presenter highlighted that it has come to light that the Solar Panels in the Free State and Cape Town provinces are being operated in Denmark via a computer system. There is a need for Gauteng as the most industrialized province to become a transmission point for solar processing to strengthen economic activities. Since renewable products and solar turbines are not located in Gauteng, this province can become the hub for solar processing to unlock the care economy. There are other potential and transferable skills that Gauteng can use to run solar processing and design.

In terms of the Township Economy, Gauteng can reorganize the township space accompanied by the intended obligation of investors in communities and townships. There is a need to localize the value chain to the community where that business is located. Townships should not only be view as retail enterprises. Production and manufacturing opportunities should be added and harnessed with the intention to market outside the community by connecting such business activities to the mainstream economy to sustain

township businesses. The presenter argues that SA criminalizes the informal sector while other small countries support informal sectors.

He further pointed out that in implementing the plan of action that yields positive outcomes in addressing the youth unemployment challenge, employment should be core to the work of government. The three major instruments worth noting include:

**1. Employment Impact Assessment Framework:** This assessment can be conducted on all new policies, plans and projects within the intergovernmental relations framework and will require government and other agencies to assess the impacts on employment.

**2. Pro-employment Budgeting:** The budgeting process in government must support the employment policy. Primarily this will involve departments providing inputs on the impacts of governmental policy implementation on employment policies.

**3. District Employment Plan:** The Employment Co-ordination Council, through its composition and focus, must be able to strengthen coordination between and across ministries, and their structures (such as MINMEC, President's Coordinating Council etc.) and across different tiers of government. Furthermore, it must resolve issues such as the duplication of public employment-related tasks between national, provincial, and local tiers of government. In this regard, the District Development Model, through its 'One Plan, One District and One Budget' approach, envisages such co-ordination.

***b) Evaluating Effectiveness of Youth Empowerment Programmes (e.g. Tshepo 1-Million and Youth Unemployment reduction): Tessa Dooms, Rivonia Circle***

Rivonia Circle is a knowledge hub organization focused on policy change, political change and society change to envision what SA should look like going forward. The SA population is comprised of 66% youth under 35 years old. Therefore, it is important to prioritize the resolution of young people's problems. It is also important that young people be involved in solving their problems. The presenter's mandate was to evaluate the effectiveness of Tshepo 1-Million but difficulties in accessing information on this Programme was experienced. Government should account on the performance and results of Tshepo 1-Million as limited knowledge relating to the impact of this programme is accessible or known.

The efforts to curb youth unemployment, should provide the assessment of what the picture of success should illustrate. This could be done through the creation of platforms that includes, economic participation not only jobs, productive transitions, diversity, and choice. Support is also crucial as youth navigate through job search and mentorship for encouragement and provision of life skills that technology cannot provide during this information age. In an economy that is youth ready it is imperative for



companies to provide growth and development ensuring upward movement as opposed to lack of promotions in factories that the older generation endured. There is a problem on the demand side in SA with companies that have no room for growth and such companies are not youth friendly. Companies need to implement human resource development better by hiring differently, with programmes that progress people through training and stop asking job seekers for 6-years of experience while there are no jobs available. Key questions to be asked for the success of youth employment intervention:

What do youth know about interventions?

What do youth want from interventions?

What do youth get from interventions?

Where do youth go after interventions?

The presenter pointed out that if youth do not get anything from interventions, it is not their interventions but for those who initiated them. Young people should not only be viewed as beneficiaries rather they should be viewed as drivers. Young people also have something to offer and they must be given the opportunity in these intervention programmes to participate either in terms of their views, opinions, labour or skills. The presentation highlighted four initiatives that are good examples in addressing youth unemployment.

**Chrysalis Academy** is based in Tukai, Western Cape. It provides a 3-months in-house youth development programme. The objective of this programme is to provide holistic training to balance and sustain the livelihoods of the youth of SA. **Psychosocial Support** is offered as part of job readiness, dealing with mental issues, stress, personal and family instabilities that pose a threat of dropping out of the programme when support is not provided. Young people need to be developed and prepared for the world of work. **Job readiness** is provided by engaging families of young people enrolled in the programme to keep them abreast of the curriculum the academy offers to ensure that regression on the skills acquired is not realized upon completion. Peer group support is critical for this programme as it enables youth to hold each other accountable, help each other to grow and develop. The biggest partnership is with the City of Western Cape, with a 1-year placement programme it has developed to provide stability and mental strength as youth transition into the world of work. There is value in holistic support.

**Diski 9.9** is a sport (soccer and netball) programme based in Diepkloof, Soweto. It is premised on the principles to “Engage, Educate, Empower”. It encourages young people to get involved in sport programmes to learn life skills and to be productive. It assists youth who want to pursue sports as a

career and as a job path. Those that are not sport inclined are trained in sports hospitality with jobs in clubs and stadiums such as FNB Soccer City. It is involved in **psychosocial support**, running a Gender-Based Violence programme. **Social Economy Work** is another programme offered which provides social value by equipping youth with skills in the health sector and as community workers, amongst others. A **Peer Support** programme is offered as a pathway support by tracking where youth are going and where they will end.

**RLabs** is based in the Western Cape flats, famous for gangsterism, violence, drug abuse and crime. Their mantra is “Making Hope Contagious”. It helps young people to develop technical skills, learning opportunities, volunteering experience, start-ups, and incubation of businesses. This organization has now been established in 23 countries around the world because these countries were willing to fund the programme. The goal of the organization is to reach 2 billion people by 2030. RLabs is not restricted to youth only, but it is open to people beyond the youth age category. Other programmes offered include, community engagements, entrepreneurship, mainly working with technology and incubating business ideas of youth for a certain period. Innovation which is inclined to creative thinking is taught. A reward system is encouraged for volunteers who can produce proof of execution of work that benefited a community without payment. Young people who work through the incubation and reward system are tracked.

**YouthLab** is involved in the incubation of spaza shops. The presenter started the spaza shop academy that is run by Youthlab and it is currently establishing 800 spaza shop annually. Incubation of spaza shops run by youth is one of its programmes but it is also open to people beyond the youth age category. Furthermore, programmes such as community engagement and entrepreneurship are offered. YouthLab is also involved in youth facilitation programmes and during Covid-19 lockdown, workshops were facilitated virtually.

It was highlighted that South Africa has an industry that is devoted to youth unemployment but investing billions in big corporate businesses that run youth programmes without actually benefiting the youth. Young people should be hired to solve their problems. Lessons learnt from the SASSA grant highlights that if youths are given money, they know how to use it. Informal businesses are crucial in growing the economy and should be nurtured until people are ready to formalize their businesses. To curb youth, unemployment, the following issues are worth noting:

- Involve youth to employ youth (government is not involving youth to solve their problems).
- Track return on investment (establish the cost of developing each youth).

- Enabling environment should be provided for youth as they transition into the world of work.

Some of the research findings highlighted that it takes R500 for a young person to look for a job consistently. It would benefit the youth and society at large if townships and villages can be converted into enabling environments by finding jobs within their communities and not travelling long distance.

***c) Framing of structural factors that drive unemployment/ Reflections on observations and learnings acquired to improve the outcomes of Tshepo 1-Million programme: Mario Meyer, Youth Capital***

This NGO is a youth-led campaign which started in 2008 as a project that was incubated by DG Mary Trust based in Cape Town. It was established in response to the issues of youth unemployment. It focuses on 3 main issues that includes: **collating information** on unemployment issues, package it and making it accessible; **building a youth led people advocacy** and **mobilizing decisionmakers** to develop **action plans** to tackle youth unemployment.

The presenter pointed out that unemployment is as a result of structural roadblocks through the transitioning into the milestone of adulthood when transitioning from post-school into the labour market and when trying to get a foothold in to the job market. In addressing youth unemployment, the following are worth noting:

- Unemployment strategies should be shaped by young people.
- A holistic approach is required to address unemployment.
- Unemployment requires a collective response.

The presentation highlighted the need for a clear and shared plan that guide the collective involvement of people in areas that include the call for action on the following:

***Education: Certify us (youth)*** by providing support to achieve qualifications on time (all who start should finish). Qualifications offer advantage to earning and job prospects.

***Catch us (youth) up:*** There is a need for a national plan to support those who fall behind to catch up and those who leave to re-enter the education and training system.

***Make us (youth) count:*** There is a need for a tracking system in place to track progress as youth move through the education system to get timely targeted support.

***Support us (youth) beyond the classroom:*** There is a need for psychosocial support that recognize many the factors that make it hard for young people to stay in learning opportunities. It is not only academic support that is required but psychosocial support is also crucial.

***Transition: Make job seeking affordable:*** Everyone should be supported in navigating the job market by making job seeking affordable and by providing financial resources because job seeking process is expensive. SA.Mobi is a good example of access to information at no cost. Most youth come from disadvantaged households where a decision must be taken on whether to buy food or give the young person money to search for a job.

***Grow our (youth) circle:*** More connection to the world of work and stronger social networks are needed, e.g. mentorship programmes to increase social capital.

***Bridge the information gap:*** There is a need to bridge the gap between young people and employers by assessing what employees are looking for and bridge the gap through short-term programmes.

***Jobs:*** Volunteering and learnership opportunities must be a stepping-stone to sustainable work and livelihoods. This enables youth to get a foothold in the job market. All experience must matter, there is a need for the employer to recognize informal, volunteer and curriculum experience. In most cases young people's experience is not viewed as valuable, tangible, or marketable.

***Unlock public opportunities:*** There is a need for more opportunities for employment and eased transition into the labour market and how to maximize incentives and SETAs to benefit young people.

***Make public employment work:*** There is a need for public employment schemes to create quality jobs that matter, e.g. presidential stimulus.

***Economic growth is important:*** Programme such as Tshepo 1 Million can make a difference in unlocking opportunities by reviewing the programme and adopting some of the existing models that have proven to produce effective outcomes.

### **Testimonials from beneficiaries of Tshepo 1- Million through Youth Capital and Activate**

***Andile Shawe*** was part of Tshepo 1-Million pilot project in partnership with Activate. He explained that through this programme he gained good and valuable experience, skills and received a stipend that he used to develop his interests and goals in sports. The problem with the programme was tracking of what the youth were doing as participants. 50% of participants were tracked and the other 50% was not tracked. Tshepo 1- Million should improve on tracking youth enrolled on the programme to assess whether a programme is a success or not.

***Klerah Sethole*** became involved with Tshepo 1- Million through Youth Capital and Activate where activations are done on request in events where young people are involved. This could be more effective if more people are hired for activations to spread out at municipal offices, innovation hubs or establish mobile offices in townships where young people can go for help (especially young people who do not

have cellphones and/or data). This could also strengthen relationships with organizations in townships/communities that deals with employment and skills development.

**Mbali Mapasola** connected with Tshepo 1- Million through Activate. It is a great initiative to grow and learn and she has learnt skills that include people management, administrative skills, time management, stakeholder management that assisted in running own projects. Tshepo 1- Million assisted with long-term and short-term projects. However, some of the opportunities provided by Tshepo 1- Million are not sustainable because when projects end, young people revert to the unemployment status. Tshepo 1- Million should industrialize opportunities, change age restriction of enrollment to the programme and sustainable opportunities should be given to the youth for support until entrenched in the labour market. The programme has also introduced a reward system for youth who are making a difference in communities.

The presenter highlighted that Tshepo 1- Million can be improved by:

- Extending existing opportunities to longer periods of time.
- Intentional focus on personal development, psychosocial support, mentorship, and social networks.
- Establishing exit pathways, helping people with their next step.

**d) *Strategies to absorb Youth in the Mainstream Economy as a Way of Reducing Unemployment: Dr Talent Thebe Zwane, University of Johannesburg (Senior Lecturer)***

The presentation highlighted that the apartheid era government has orchestrated SA into unequal society and Covid-19 has deepened this crisis. After more than 20 years of democracy, SA is still battling poverty, unemployment, and hunger. Unemployment in SA is extremely high when compared to other countries with similar characteristics.

The findings on Twitter data analysis of 3310 people conducted in December 2021 highlighted concerns relating to the non-involvement of youth in policies that affects them. Youth feels dumped and disconnected from government and policymakers. They do not have hope for employment. Poverty and unemployment go hand in hand because unemployment breeds poverty. Poverty is a disease that needs to be eradicated. There is a need to unlock economic growth to tackle youth unemployment. There is no alignment between unemployment and economic growth and women are mostly affected by unemployment irrespective of race. The presentation further highlighted that the rate of unemployment for women is above the national rational rate. African black and coloured communities are the most vulnerable in terms of poverty and unemployment. Basic education needs to be fixed. Eastern Cape

province has the largest number of unemployment followed by Free State province. Unemployment rate per metro in Gauteng highlighted that Tshwane has the highest unemployment rate.

The news that Tshepo 1- Million has failed to meet its target due to Covid-19 lockdown is disappointing. Questions that arise due to the under-performance of Tshepo 1- Million includes whether:

- Resources were routed to the right channels/ industries that create jobs.
- If resources were channeled to the right industries, how were these industries selected.
- Whether enough awareness was created to attract interested youth to participate in programmes offered.

Since the Tshepo 1- Million programme is known by few people in communities that includes Soweto amongst others; the question is, how is this project marketed and why is it that many people are not aware of its existence. Policies and programmes are failing because they are not targeting the right industries. The presenter highlighted that policy options to confront youth unemployment should include amongst others:

**Training programmes:** These are necessary to enhance productivity and employability of participants to strengthen human capital through skills improvement for young jobseekers, while simultaneously fulfilling the needs of labour demand. Interventions through the education system need to raise the quality of basic and higher education, re-engage drop-outs with the education system and provide an environment that cultivates academic, technical, and vocational skills.

**Labour market intervention:** These interventions are crucial and should include other training mechanisms that can yield positive outcomes that includes learnerships and apprenticeships to fast-track the development of employees, offer current and potential employee opportunities to acquire accredited qualifications and, serve as an entry point for young people into jobs.

**Employment services:** To improve job search and job matching. Although there are private sector services, Public Employment Services (PES) are dominant as they primarily target the disadvantaged and the long-term unemployed.

**Wage or employment subsidy:** This is another crucial factor that aims to narrow the gap between entry-level real wages and productivity for young people, thereby reducing the risk associated with hiring and stimulating job creation.

**Entrepreneurship scheme:** This is critical in promoting skills of young people with the objective of creating and managing sustainable and efficient businesses capable of providing permanent jobs and employment growth. While initial programmes under this category were implemented solely by

government, international experience has shown that they tend to attract private sector and non-governmental financing and implementation.

**Direct public sector employment creation:** This is crucial in absorbing job seekers into the labour market by mitigating the depreciation of human capital during periods of unemployment. South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) consists of a range of short-to-medium term programmes aimed at providing short-term jobs and training for the unemployed. The success of the programme was, however, diluted by the limited duration of jobs, lack of training, and low labour intensity which increased the cost per job created. There is also little evidence that participating in EPWP projects improves a participant's subsequent transition to formal and private sector employment.

**Comprehensive labour market policies:** These tend to involve job and life skills training, apprenticeship and/or entrepreneurship schemes, information, counselling, placement, financial incentives, and other support. Therefore, there's a need for tailoring existing policies and leveraging existing institutions to pursue a comprehensive active labour market policy.

**Economic growth:** This is important in ensuring the creation of additional policies that support accelerated and sustained economic growth as a growing economy boosts labour demand and decent employment opportunities. Government should implement several interventions to improve the quality of education, reduce the number of dropouts, and expand further education and training.

The presentation highlighted the need for government to initiate a process of public consultation regarding available options to the state to increase the number of youths in employment in Gauteng /South Africa. The following are factors worth noting in curbing youth unemployment:

**Establishment of a Coordinating Office** can assist in assessing good policies that are not well coordinated and are bound to fail.

**Monitoring Office** that includes stakeholders with various skills or practical experience (i.e. academics; farmers; unionists etc.) is imperative.

**Impact evaluation** is necessary to assess whether implemented projects are making a difference.

**Unlocking avenues for economic growth** is critical to grow the economy to create jobs since the economy is not growing as expected.

**Involvement of youth in crafting policies** is pivotal in using big data/social media platforms to get the sentiments of youth and analyze their view before implementing policies.

**Policy initiatives** should be shared with institutions of higher learning to assist in sourcing youth perceptions and expressions on social media and conduct data analysis.

**Education system should be fixed** to develop critical thinkers and problem solvers who are able to address the ever growing and changing business, economic and societal challenges.

**Teaching and training youth** to be job creators rather than job seekers as it was taught by the apartheid government.

**The growth of the Township Economy/SMMEs** should be supported to develop township economies which are crucial to the development of the country's economy.

**Development and support of SMMEs** in South Africa should help propel the growth of the township economy.

Greater awareness should be created to attract the attention of many youths who are interested to participate in youth employment programmes.

A successful **communication campaign** hinges on the use of all government (and other alternative) communication platforms on an ongoing basis to provide relevant information to the public.

**Nepotism and Unfair Treatment** is still regarded as a problem at local government level.

**Poorly drafted policies** create challenges in producing intended outcomes.

**Access to information** on how to grow a business is necessary, including where and how to get finance; how to market a business; how to attract new customers; how to run a business, required skills; training opportunities; as well as opportunities to gain experience.

The urgency to defuse this time-bomb of youth unemployment will help create social stability in South Africa.

***e) National Youth Development Agency's contribution to Youth Employment in Gauteng & its link to Tshepo 1-Million Programme: Ms Minah Ngwetjana, Official, NYDA***

The presenter highlighted that NYDA is expediting Education & Grant funding with a focus on job creation through the provision of grants. The purpose of this programme is to link unemployed youth to employment or training opportunities that includes, full-time employment, contractual employment, and temporary jobs.

This programme also provides training opportunities that includes internships, learnerships and apprenticeships as well as skills training programmes. The objective of the jobs programme is to place unemployed youth in employment opportunities, to source sustainable employment and training opportunities and to ensure that there is a database of candidates covering all sectors.

NYDA Jobs Database includes unemployed youth between the ages of 18-35, youth without matric and those with matric, graduates and post-graduates who are in possession of the South African identity. Youth training on Life Skills and Job Preparedness is provided. Access to the NYDA Jobs Database is free (no cost). Youth who are registered on the database are prioritized when job placements arise.



Employers are required to register their businesses (i.e. company registration number) to qualify as opportunity providers and should be able to prove the legitimacy of their business when required. Opportunity providers must conduct their own interviews and businesses in the sex trade industry are excluded.

**f) Youth Employment Fund contribution towards youth employment in Gauteng and its link to Tshepo 1- Million to decrease youth unemployment: Department of Education, Ms. Percy Moleke -CEO, GCRA.**

The presentation highlighted policies and programmatic interventions of government that should respond to different needs of young people. There is a need to focus on youth as they transition from school to the labour market. The integrated government youth programme needs to adopt a holistic approach. There is limited government information available on youth programmes and this should be unlocked for ease of access. The private sector needs do not cater for the pool of young people from disadvantaged communities who dropped out of school. Private sector requires minimum matric plus experience as 1<sup>st</sup> entry job level and matric plus experience for learnerships. School completion should be incentivized as a way of encouraging young people to be responsible in taking charge of their lives.

In terms of job opportunities, employers must also take into consideration the existing pool of jobseekers (with and without matric). Youth should be encouraged to apply for TVET colleges and not only universities, and employers should give experiential learning to those who attended TVET colleges to ensure that they obtain their diploma certificates. The current norm is that youth who have matric and those without matric are viewed in the same light by employers.

There is a need for government to take into consideration **Workforce development programmes** by negotiating with the private sector to afford youth the opportunity for internships and learnerships in their companies. An **Entrepreneurial programme** is crucial to provide awareness to youth to ensure that their business ideas are marketable. Government is now starting to trace bursars to encourage youth to enroll for post-graduate certificates and GCRA is providing bursaries for this certificate. Government is moving towards engaging youth before they leave school through career exhibitions in communities and to expose them to the labour market.

The presentation highlighted that it costs R938.00 to search for a job. Youth who survive on their grandparents' pension grant are faced with the reality of choosing either to buy food or use the money to search for a job since the pension grant is equivalent to the cost for job search. The budget for the

bursary for 2020/21 FY has been rolled-over to the 2021/22FY as it was not utilized due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Due to Covid-19 lockdown, there were no placements of youth in private institutions, therefore, youth were placed in schools for Covid-19 screening with a stipend payment and were given training for exit opportunities. Government's performance on PwDs is poor and there is a need to have sign language interpreters in every government institution. Tshepo 1- Million should be transferred to GCRA for effective implementation as this agency has experienced success in their interventions as well as being passionate about youth development.

The GCRA Bursary Programme has the largest reach and impact. Some of the training programmes are reliant on host employers and partnerships whilst others, are small intake projects which cumulatively make a difference, as well as quality programmes with qualifications outcomes. The GCRA is exploring expansion into online learning to take advantage of the 4IR but this requires investment in infrastructure and connectivity which is a biggest hurdle for youth. The presenter highlighted that the Gauteng Province needs:

- A co-ordinated approach to youth development and a focus on addressing 'the disadvantaged'.
- Progression from single-sector, problem-focused responses toward cross-sectoral programmes that help support youth in reaching their full potential.
- To open the public service as a training space for youth and first job experience which is a GCR perspective of 'building talent'.
- A single database/system of GCR youth with multiple links to different interventions to enable and managing transitions.
- A set of standard indicators that can be used for various interventions to compare effectiveness and lessons learnt, which interventions work better for which category of young people and in which circumstances.

***g) Sharing experiences on involvement with the Tshepo 1-Million Programme & the value derived as well as potential areas for improvement***

**MS. ANNA MTHEMBU**

Tshepo 1- Million is not a job creation programme but provides skills and job placements with a stipend. Youth Placements are conducted through SA Youth and MobiSite (data free site). The presenter highlighted that she underwent a programme on youth solving youth issues and it provided valuable life

skills and check-up (tracing) was conducted but the number of attendees went down because no stipend was paid. When the project with stipends ends and entrepreneurial training without stipend commences, the youth start losing interest and stop attending the programme spreading rumours that the programme is not working.

### **MS. MILICENT SATHEKGE**

This beneficiary joined Tshepo 1- Million in 2019 through Harambee. Youth can access the Tshepo 1- Million programme on FaceBook free of charge. She was part of the Tshepo 1-Million beneficiaries who conducted awareness campaigns about the danger of drugs in 2019 before the Covid-19 lockdown. She is currently one of the Tshepo 1-Million ambassadors, providing programme awareness and impact.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The workshop achieved its objective of i) identifying challenges that unemployed youth are faced with on a daily basis as well as hinderances which prevent them from becoming gainfully employed, ii) soliciting views from participants on developmental and upskilling initiatives that government needs to consider in improving youth employment and, iii) identifying strategies that could assist in absorbing youth into the mainstream economy as a way of reducing youth unemployment.

Members of the Committee did not only deepen their understanding of the plight of unemployed youth in Gauteng, but they were also afforded the opportunity to interrogate issues of concern, explore other alternatives as additional mechanisms to reduce youth unemployment and will ultimately be able to formulate recommendations/resolutions to the Office of the Premier for implementation to improve strategies for youth unemployment initiatives and projects/programmes. Furthermore, the workshop shared light and equipped the Committee on the dynamics of youth unemployment as well as the challenges and dangers it poses to the province and the country at large. In conclusion, it would be prudent that OCPOLE conduct feedback sessions and follow-up workshops in all regions focusing on localised issues.

## **6. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES PROPOSED BY ECONOMIC EXPERTS**

**The following strategies were proposed by the experts to confront the youth unemployment challenge:**

1. Employment Impact Assessment Framework: Assessment of all new policies, plans and projects within the inter-governmental relations framework to evaluate the impacts on youth employment.

2. Pro-employment Budgeting: The budgeting process in government must support employment policy. Primarily this will involve departments providing inputs on the impacts of governments policy on employment policies.
3. District Employment Plan: The Employment Co-ordination Council, through its composition and focus, must be able to strengthen coordination between and across ministries and across different tiers of government. Furthermore, it must resolve issues such as the duplication of public employment-related tasks between national, provincial, and local tiers of government.
4. A reward system is encouraged for volunteers who can produce proof of execution of work that benefited a community without payment.
5. Involve youth to employ youth (government is not involving youth to solve their problems).
6. Track return on investment (establish the cost of developing each youth).
7. An enabling environment should be provided for youth as they transition into the world of work.
8. Training programmes are necessary to enhance productivity and employability of participants to strengthen human capital through skills improvement for young jobseekers, while simultaneously fulfilling the needs of labour demand. In addition, interventions through the education system need to raise the quality of basic and higher education, re-engaging dropouts with the education system that provides an enabling environment to cultivate academic, technical and vocational skills.
9. Labour market interventions are crucial and should include other training mechanisms that can yield positive outcomes that include learnerships and apprenticeships to fast-track the development of employees, offer current and potential employee opportunities to acquire accredited qualifications and, serve as an entry point for young people into jobs.
10. Employment services: To improve job search and job matching. Although there are private sector services, Public Employment Services (PES) are dominant as they primarily target the disadvantaged and the long-term unemployed.
11. Wage or employment subsidy is crucial in narrowing the gap between entry-level real wages and productivity for young people, thereby reducing the risk associated with hiring and stimulating job creation.
12. Entrepreneurship schemes are critical in promoting skills of young people with the objective of creating and managing sustainable and efficient businesses capable of providing permanent jobs and employment growth. These schemes have shown that they tend to attract private sector and non-governmental financing once implemented.
13. Direct public sector employment creation is crucial in absorbing job seekers into the labour market by mitigating the depreciation of human capital during periods of unemployment. South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) consists of a range of short-to-medium term programmes aimed at

providing short-term jobs and training for the unemployed. The success of the programme was, however, diluted by the limited duration of jobs, lack of training, and low labour intensity which increased the cost per job created.

14. Comprehensive labour market policies should be considered as they tend to involve job and life skills training, apprenticeship and/or entrepreneurship schemes, information, counselling, placement, financial incentives, and other support. There's a need for tailoring existing policies and leveraging existing institutions to pursue a comprehensive active labour market policy.

15. Economic growth - the creation of additional policies that support accelerated and sustained economic growth are necessary to boost the economy, labour demand and decent employment opportunities. Government should implement several interventions to improve the quality of education, reduce the number of dropouts, and expand further education and training.

16. Establishment of a Coordinating Office can assist in assessing good policies that are not well synchronized and bound to fail.

17. Monitoring Office that include stakeholders with various skills or practical experience (i.e. academics; farmers; unionists etc.) is imperative. This office could assist with impact evaluation to assess whether implemented projects are making a difference.

19. Unlocking avenues to grow the economy is critical for job creation since the economy is not growing at the expected or necessary rate.

20. Involvement of youth in crafting policies is pivotal in using big data/social media platforms to get the sentiments of youth and analyze their view before implementing policies.

21. Policy initiatives should be shared with institutions of higher learning to assist in sourcing youth perceptions and expressions on social media and conducting data analysis.

22. Education system should be systematically transformed to develop critical thinkers and problem solvers who are able to address the ever growing and changing business, economic and societal challenges.

23. Teaching and training youth to be job creators rather than job seekers is critical.

24. The growth of the Township Economy and the development of SMMEs should be prioritized to develop township economies which are crucial to the development of the country's economy.

25. Understanding the different and segmented groups of young people who require different individual interventions e.g. a young person without a matric requires a different intervention to an unemployed graduate.

26. Greater awareness should be created to attract the attention of many youths who are interested in participating in youth employment programmes such as Tshepo 1 Million.

27. A successful communication campaign hinges on the use of all government (and alternative) communication platforms on an ongoing basis to provide relevant information to the public.
28. Nepotism and unfair treatment is still a major problem at local government level.
29. Poorly drafted policies create challenges in producing intended outcomes.
- 30 Access to information on how to grow a business is necessary, including where and how to get finance; how to market a business; how to attract new customers; how to run a business as well as the requisite skills; training opportunities and avenues to gain experience.
31. A co-ordinated approach to youth development and a focus on addressing 'the disadvantaged' is important.
32. Progression from single-sector, problem-focused responses toward cross-sectoral programmes that help support youth in reaching their full potential.
33. To open the public service as a training space for youth and first job experience which is a GCR perspective of 'building talent'.
34. To establish a single database/system of GCR youth with multiple links to different interventions to enable and manage transitions.
35. To develop a set of standard indicators that can be used for various interventions to compare effectiveness and lessons learnt, interventions that work better for different categories of young people in various circumstances.

## **7. CONCERNS RAISED BY THE YOUTH**

The following concerns related to youth unemployment were raised by participants during the workshop:

- 7.1 Lack of access to data network companies.
- 7.2 Lack of government accountability as youth are not aware where to direct their issues of concern or how to get feedback on their issues.
- 7.3 Some of government programmes aimed at youth empowerment are not designed with the intended beneficiaries in mind. Young people feel misunderstood and as a result programmes are misapplied.
- 7.4 Lack of monitoring systems in government. There is lack of professionalism during the programme implementation process and delays in payments of stipends (e.g. GCRA & Department of Education); non-completion of government programme/s to unemployed youth (i.e. GCRA programme) and accreditation certificate/s are not issued once training has been

completed and at times it is reported that assessors are busy, as a result there will be no accreditation.

- 7.5 Tshepo 1-Million programme is known by few in various communities as it is mostly marketed on online platforms which limits accessibility to those who need them the most. Programme awareness reach people too late with limited information and as a result, benefits only few people.
- 7.6 Youth are not able to access jobs and to enter workforce due to the demand for work experience in entry level jobs.
- 7.7 Government programmes not focusing on technical/tangible/vocational skills.
- 7.8 Drug abuse in certain communities as a result of loitering due to joblessness and lack of skills.
- 7.9 Lack of opportunities for People with Disabilities. Most of the youth empowerment programmes in government rarely ever cater for youth living with disabilities as a result, these young people feel forgotten by government. For instance, there are few institutions that can be of assistance to deaf people. There are very few opportunities for deaf people due to lack of access to information and in instances where job opportunities are available, these are mainly given to men. Deaf women also experience abuse. Furthermore, young people who are deaf face challenges at schools for the deaf and beyond schooling such as when visiting government offices, where they experience communication barriers as there are no interpreters.
- 7.10 Lack of protection for young women as they often get raped or sexually harassed when they are called for job interviews.
- 7.11 Youth apply for bursaries without success and no reasons are provided for the not qualifying.
- 7.12 Young people who belong to the “missing-middle” cohort do not qualify for NSFAS as they are above the threshold but do not qualify for bursary/bank loans as they are deemed unable to pay back. This is a major hinderance as it denies access to education and cripples young people into many forms of debts.
- 7.13 The EPWP jobs are accessible but not sustainable due to the short-term nature.
- 7.14 There is a lack of transparency in government programmes. Programmes implemented in communities are not properly introduced and only a few people are notified. There is no open recruitment process and implementation of programmes start without proper discussion about the number of community members to be hired on the project. Whenever government and service providers hire, they should make sure that jobs are divided equally and fairly amongst the communities.

- 7.15 Some of the youth development programmes that are short-term ends without *real* skill being gained or acquired. As a result, youth often jump from programme to programme without learning tangible or sustainable skills.
- 7.16 Youth programmes only benefit those who are below 35 years of age, however beyond 35 years, unemployment is still prevalent, and empowerment is still necessary in any shape or form.
- 7.17 There is too much red tape in registering a business or starting one especially for young people who are new to the game.
- 7.18 Lack of transparency and nepotism from local councillors and officials. Leaders demanding bribes before they can offer available opportunities. For youth to be able to access government jobs they must be part of political parties or at least be related to party leaders. Therefore, accessibility to these programmes is a major issue.
- 7.19 Youth qualifications seem useless because of the high demand for experiences that they don't have. This issue is also cyclical because youth cannot gain experience without a job, and they cannot get a job without experience.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations to address the youth unemployment challenge were sponsored by young people during the workshop. The recommendations, which are categorised for short-, medium- and long-term intervention are listed below. It is therefore recommended:

8.1 That the OoP provides the Committee with a progress report on the short-term interventions proposed by the youth by **30 May 2022**.

### **PROPOSED SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS**

- 8.1.1 Community-based projects for young people should be run by young people and government as partners. These projects should avoid bringing people from outside the local community to implement these programmes.
- 8.1.2. Government officials should be deployed to communities to listen and act on the plight of the youth.
- 8.1.3. Youth should be given job opportunities at Pick-it-Up, Soup Kitchens, Urban Food Garden and EPWP as a matter of urgency.
- 8.1.4 Government departments must ensure accessibility of online information to empower youth as well as comprehensive, up to date and properly marketed community roadshows and other accessible formats.



- 8.1.5 Companies should introduce on the job training so that those without the relevant experience are not excluded.
- 8.1.6 Councillors must always be transparent in their processes of providing available opportunities to young people.
- 8.1.7 Outreach programmes must be made visible and accessible.
- 8.1.8 **The OoP must review the Tshepo 1-Million programme to ensure maximum impact.**
- 8.2 That the OoP provides the Committee with a progress report on the medium-term interventions proposed by the youth by **30 September 2022**.

### **PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS FOR THE MEDIUM-TERM**

- 8.2.1 Awareness campaigns on youth development and employment programmes should be done on community radios, television shows and social media for awareness and increased access.
- 8.2.2 More opportunities for People with Disabilities (PwDs) should be provided. Programmes to benefit youth living with disabilities should be developed, particularly those that can empower them to live normal lives like the rest of the society.
- 8.2.3 There is a need for vocational skills development and access thereof. Government should partner with Schools of Specialization and TVET colleges to implement vocational/technical programmes for the unemployed youth. This is in large because they are experiencing difficulties to gain entrance to these colleges. Establish an Ombudsman to report TVET colleges that rejects admission of youth without recourse and to deal with corruption taking place at these institutions.
- 8.2.4 Involve TVET colleges in training Tshepo 1-Million beneficiaries to acquire vocational/technical skills which promotes entrepreneurship instead of call-center skills that requires youth to seek employment. Acquisition of vocational/technical skills will lead to sustainable jobs.
- 8.2.5 Support young people without matric certificates (or the equivalent TVET qualification) to go back for a second chance opportunity for them to gain educational muster.
- 8.2.6 Government should work in collaboration with NGOs such as Youth Capital for advocacy and awareness of Tshepo 1- Million since the scope of the former is more entrenched and well known at community level.
- 8.2.7 Intervention strategies for drug usage, monitoring and control drug usage from a primary school level rather than implementing reactive strategies at youth level when they are already wallowing in addiction.

- 8.2.8 Make psycho-social support services accessible to young people in communities. Youth trauma houses should be established to provide psycho-social support for youth dealing with rape, loss of parents through AIDS etc.
  - 8.2.9 Availability of free Wi-Fi in communities and government facilities to provide data cost relief when searching for jobs.
  - 8.2.10 There is a need for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of government programmes. Government departments should monitor the roll-out of programmes and hold service providers accountable for the services provided and ensure tracing of beneficiaries.
  - 8.2.11 Sustainable training and development: The youth empowerment training opportunities must be long-term, career-building, and sustainable. Three-month contracts that do not empower or uplift the youth are not impactful.
  - 8.2.12 Remove work experience for certain jobs as a requirement to entry level jobs.
  - 8.2.13 Tailor-make solutions for the existing youth: government must be familiar with communities and youth on the ground to avoid mismatch of skills provided.
  - 8.2.14 Address corruption that hinders opportunities for young people.
  - 8.2.15 Youth should think beyond jobs. There should be a focus on business funding for young people and safe entrepreneurship incubation spaces for small businesses should be created.
  - 8.2.16 There is a need for job centres in every community that are not biased along partisan politics
  - 8.2.17 50% of youth should be afforded leadership positions.
  - 8.2.18 Specific social platforms should be created to advertise all existing vacancies, learnerships etc.
- 8.3 That the OoP provides the Committee with a progress report on the long-term interventions proposed by the youth by **30 January 2023**.

### **PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS FOR THE LONG-TERM**

- 8.3.1 There is a need to localise and decentralise service provision. Employ youth and empower them to take control of their lives through maximum reach in rolling-out programmes tailored by them as implementors. Government must also utilize existing community structures such as NGOs, established networks and the youth.
- 8.3.2 A new and separate strategy is required to assist people who are 35 and above who were unable to access government programmes during their youth days and are now structurally unemployable in the long term (especially those without matric certificates).
- 8.3.3 The process to register a business or entity must not have unnecessary restrictions that prevent and discourage the youth from starting SMMEs.

- 8.3.4 There is a need to improve the basic school education system. Education must be geared towards empowerment of youth to ensure that when exiting school at any legal level, the skills acquired would benefit them. It is important for education to be responsive to the economy by ensuring that the skills taught at school contributes to growing the economy of the country.
- 8.3.5 Promulgate a Youth Development Act that streamlines and ensures all youth unemployment and youth development strategies complement each other. An entity and requisite fund could even be created to manage this process of protecting and benefitting young people economically. Ultimately, pro-youth policies and laws are needed.
- 8.3.6 Tshepo 1- Million should be transferred to GCRA for effective implementation as this agency has experienced success in their interventions as well as being passionate about youth development.
- 8.3.7 There is a need for engagement with GCRA on youth related work in communities to create a bridge on activities pertaining to youth mainstreaming.

## **12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Committee hereby thanks and acknowledges the participants during this workshop, that includes amongst others, the youth of Gauteng, Office of the Premier and some of the GPG Departments, government agencies, economic and development experts and stakeholders.

I also wishes to thank the following OCPOL Members: ME Khumalo; F Hassan; LE Makhubela; ST Msimanga; C Mabala; I Mukwevho, DK Adams and A Alberts for their diligence and commitment during this project.

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## **9. ADOPTION**

After due deliberation, the Oversight Committee on the Premier's Office and the Legislature adopted the report unanimously. In accordance with Rule 164, the Committee presents the report and recommendations made herein for consideration and adoption by the House