

Design and Implementation Evaluation of Governments Youth Employment Creation Programmes

POLICY SUMMARY, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND SUMMARY REPORT

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GLOSSARY

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
ADP	Artisan Development Programme
AU	African Union
BASA	Business and Arts South Africa
BEEI	Basic Education Employment Initiative
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CETA	Construction Education and Training Authority
CIM	Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring
CIP	Critical Infrastructure Programme
CSA	Care and Support Assistants
CWP	Community Works Programme
DAC	Development Assistance Criteria
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DBE	Department of basic Education
DDG	Deputy Director General
DG	Director General
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DSAC	Department of Sport, Art and Culture
DUF	Danish Youth Council
DPWI	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
EA	Economically Active
ECF	Employment Creation Fund
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ERRP	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FET	Further Education and Training
FLIMS	Funza Lushaka Information Management System
GAs	General Assistants
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GYECP	Government Youth Employment Creation Programme
HCI	Human Capital Index
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPRP	Industrial Parks Revitalisation Programme
ISFAP	Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
IYDS	Integrated Youth Development Strategy
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NARYSEC	National Rural Youth Service Corps
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	Not Economically Active
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework

NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPMN	National Pathway Management Network
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYS	National Youth Service
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act
PED	Provincial Education Department
PEP	Public Employment Programme
PES	Presidential Employment Stimulus
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate of Education
PMTE	Property Management Trading Entity
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PWP	Public Works Programme
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Intervention
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALGA	South Africa Local Government Association
SBA	School Based Assessment
SC	Senior Certificate
SCMP	Second Chance Matric Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Sport and Enrichment Assistants
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEFA	Small Enterprise Financing Agency
SETA's	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
ToC	Theory of Change
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAP	Working-Age Population
WBL	Workplace-based learning
WCG	Western Cape Government
YeBo	Year Beyond
YECp	Youth Employment Creation Programme
YEDS	Youth Enterprise Development Strategy
YES	Youth Employment Service

POLICY SUMMARY

High unemployment is a significant crisis. It negatively affects both youth and the national economy.

There are approximately 280 different Youth Employment Creation Programmes (YCEP) in South Africa across the various levels of government. These programmes are government's public employment programmes (PEP) aimed at addressing youth unemployment through of knowledge services, skills development services, employment services and SMME development services. Among the 280 programmes identified, there are programmes that focus specifically on the youth and then there are public employment programmes (PEPs) that have a broader coverage of the population, of which "the youth" are one of several priority segments.

In evaluating South Africa's Government's Youth Employment Creation ecosystem over the period 2016 to 2022, the following are high-level recommendations based on key findings of the study:

- 1. Institutional arrangement:** Local government should play a more significant role in youth development, with the South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) being considered to facilitate this. There should be an increase in the proportion of Youth Employment Creation Programmes (YCEP) developed and implemented at the local government level.
- 2. YCEP formulation: Demand versus supply side:** Shift focus from supply side to demand side of the youth labour market, emphasising metrics like private job creation, business development, and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Increase the number of YCEP with demand side Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and foster more public-private partnerships (PPPs) at the national level.
- 3. YCEP formulation: Development model:** Evolve YCEP towards smaller public funding, faster adaptation to workplace changes, and stronger alignment with private industry through increased public-private partnerships.
- 4. YCEP formulation: Exit pathways:** Prioritise creating clear pathways for participants to transition to permanent employment. Increase the number of exit pathways in YCEPs and consider incentives for private sector firms that hire YCEP participants.
- 5. Financial resource planning:** While expanding funding is not feasible, aggregate funding through closure of certain YCEPs and reallocation of resources can be done based on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data. Reduce the number of YCEPs and consolidate funding.
- 6. Legislative framework: Policy environment:** Simplify the policy environment by decentralising policymaking to provinces and districts, with shorter focus periods aligning with the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) periods.
- 7. Legislative framework: SMARTness of objectives within policy:** Ensure YCEP objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART). Reiterate the importance of setting clear and measurable objectives.
- 8. Partnerships:** Encourage collaboration between government departments to avoid duplication of efforts and increase joint funding of YCEPs. Aim to reduce the isolated nature of YCEPs.

- 9. Dissemination of knowledge: Online systems and data availability:** Improve online presence and accessibility of YECP information to ensure accurate and up-to-date programme details are available.
- 10. Dissemination of knowledge: Programme documentation:** Ensure all YECPs have clear strategic documentation outlining objectives, Theory of Change (TOC), and intended outcomes available to stakeholders.
- 11. Skills development:** Review the focus on skills development within YECPs, emphasising integration into market-oriented entities and addressing the demand side of the labour market. Assess the effectiveness of skills development programmes in reducing youth unemployment.
- 12. Monitoring and evaluation:** Increase monitoring and evaluation efforts within the YECP ecosystem to assess programme effectiveness and ensure transparency and accountability. Implement disincentives for programmes lacking appropriate M&E data and incentives for those with comprehensive data collection.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT

1.1. Introduction and background to the intervention

Youth Employment Creation Programmes (YECP) are government's public employment programmes (PEP) specifically aimed at addressing youth unemployment. They do so by primarily providing one of four workstream services: (1) knowledge services, (2) skills development services, (3) employment services, and (4) SMME development services. These YECP are typically focused on the supply side of the youth labour market and concerned with the employability of youths.

1.2. Background to the evaluation

In 2023, the DPME and DWYPD commissioned Urban-Econ Development Economists to undertake a design and implementation evaluation, covering the period 2016 to 2022. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the design, effectiveness and efficiency of government youth employment creation programmes (YECP) in South Africa.

1.3. Methodology

The methodology consisted of documentary study, literature review, including an international benchmarking study; development of a master TOC model, including a narrative and logframe; development of an inventory of all YECP implemented over the period of the study; analysis of supplementary data from various YECP; key Informant interviews with relevant government officials; and an online survey with end-users.

2. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THEORY OF CHANGE (TOC)

The Theory of Change (TOC) was developed specifically for this evaluation, as a Master TOC which was used to depict the overall YECP ecosystem in South Africa. The TOC took into account four broad categories of YECP being knowledge empowerment services, provision of employment, SMME development services and skills development services.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW, DOCUMENT ANALYSIS AND BENCHMARKING STUDY

The following are key emerging issues from the literature review and benchmarking study:

- 1. Youth categorisation:** Most countries follow the UN definition of youth which stands as those people aged 15-24-years of age. South Africa, as well as the rest of SADC, regards a youth as an individual between the ages of 15 and 35-years of age.
- 2. YECP ecosystem:** There is a YECP ecosystem that is constrained by various elements such as government policy, international agreements, and the needs of an economy. Within this ecosystem various institutions operate to address youth unemployment.
- 3. Youth unemployment:** Youth unemployment in South Africa is the highest it has been in the history of the nation. The trend has increased from the inception of the democratic state and appears to have worsened in the intervening period.

4. **YECP inventory:** There are approximately 280 different YECP in South Africa across the various levels of government. They appear to operate largely in siloed conditions and typically have poor communications and limited online presences.
5. **Labour market policies:** Other countries such as Denmark and as attempted in Peru, have more liberal labour markets aimed at creating a more desirable hiring environment for businesses and firms could aid in reducing youth unemployment by lessening the administrative burden on businesses and providing favourable conditions for these businesses to absorb these youth.
6. **Military/Service personnel:** The use of military or service personnel by other countries to utilise youth, meet national labour needs, and inculcate skills and discipline among youth is common as a means to initiate youth employment could be an effective way to develop skills, habits, and other positive outcomes for youth in South Africa.
7. **Basic experimental YECP:** Some developing countries make use of less advanced and more basic technological products in their YECP, such as the Do-Nou project in various regions of the country and yield better results for a lower capital input.
8. **Lower administrative levels:** Other nations drive YECP developments, initiatives, and budget to lower levels of government and administration, a devolution of national central planning seem to potentially aid a reduction in the level of youth unemployment, and
9. **Broader macroeconomic issues:** The other nations focus on addressing more general macroeconomic problems in the economy may further the issue of tackling youth unemployment. A few examples from the benchmarked countries are provided below in this context.

4. KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1. What youth employment creation programmes are currently offered by the South African government (inventory of youth job creation programmes) at national, provincial and local levels?

The research identified 280 programmes in South Africa that were targeting youth during the period between 2016 and 2022. These programmes differ in terms of their focus, geographical spread, ownership and service offerings. Of these YECP, 50% were implemented at a local level, 23% at the district level, and between 18% and 27% were at the national or provincial level.

4.2. Are the existing government programmes designed and adequately resourced to contribute towards reducing youth unemployment?

It can be quantified that in order to have taken the youth unemployment rate for 15–34-year-olds in South Africa to 0% (only considering unemployed and not considering those not in employment, education or training (NEET)) would require an average annual spend of R114.7 billion which equates to 7.1% of government expenditure on average (based on 2015-2023 expend. Values).

To completely resolve the issue of youth unemployment in South Africa to the extent that youths would be employed at the expanded public works pay rate throughout a year, would require R1.032 trillion over the period of 2015-2023. Based on the above, the average annual spend on youths to resolve youth unemployment would equate to: R27 828.24 per youth.

This value provides an efficiency spend benchmark against which the other programmes evaluated in this report can be assessed and compared. The current median spend of the YEC equates to R21 466,49, below the required efficiency spend and without considering the fact that youth unemployment has continued to climb over the last two decades, in spite of the most advanced YEC ecosystem, and the net employment effect on employment from the post-YEC survey conducted by this evaluation was a 4%-point increase in unemployment.

4.3. Is the suite of government programmes contributing to the broader country's objectives of creating employment for the country's youth (sustainable job creation)?

In total the median number of jobs across the industries/sectors (within which YEC has been active) amounts of 8 793 199 – this is the median value between the employment value of 2012 and 2022. The number of work opportunities created over this period amounts to 4 633 523 – which when contrasted against the number of employment opportunities in the working economy is a significant proportion of the overall total – at 52.7% of the total annual jobs. However, what was compared in the evaluation was the total cumulative work opportunities created by the YEC programmes over 8 years against a single year of employment. The following comparison can be summarised as follows:

$$YEC \text{ Annual work opportunities created} = \frac{4\,633\,523}{8} = 579\,190$$

From the above, it is evident that the YEC programmes, on an annual basis aggregated across time, have provided work opportunities to the tune of 579 190 a year, which equates to 6.5% per annum. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that these work opportunities are sustainable or long-term, thus whilst the programmes are contributing toward having youths in the workplace – or working under conditions/using skills appropriate to the workspace – it cannot be said that they are creating or contributing to the creation of sustainable long-term employment.

Whilst YEC programmes do contribute to employment it is not apparent that this is sustainable or long-term employment. This issue may be clarified to some extent with the analysis of YEC participant survey data but presently, the YEC programmes cannot be stated as contributing towards sustainable long-term employment.

4.4. Are these programmes aligned with the overarching legislative framework/plans?

The South African YEC ecosystem is characterised by extensive policy instruments with at least eight separate policy items over two decades. It is evident that the YEC are driven by a litany of different policy items – this is not in itself problematic as a heterogeneous array of policy items likely provides sound coverage of various interests – however, it does imply that there are several differing groups of interests driving various programmes. This would generally be considered a good outcome for the YEC ecosystem. However, what is concerning is the level of programmes – 5 of the 12 – that are not clearly linked to some policy instrument. This finding raises concerns, as it is thus indiscernible what the driving force of the respective programmes are, and therefore, difficult to discern the effectiveness of these programmes.

An assessment was conducted to provide an overview of the specificity and measurability of the objectives outlined in the NDP 2030 (youth centric objectives) and NYP 2030. The fact that some of these objectives can be reasonably labelled as non-specific & un-measurable is a concern as these are guiding instruments that much convey concise objectives and goals.

The above is further compounded by the anecdotal evidence of gathered during the research process by the team in so far as the status of the M&E systems and their accessibility by the public is concerned. Given the above, and in response to the evaluation question, it is evident that to some extent the YEC ecosystem in South Africa does align to various policy and legislation. However, the specificity and measurability of the driving policy objectives were questioned and furthermore the developmental focus on employability over employment flagged as an issue.

4.5. How does South Africa compare with other countries (countries of similar economies) on government youth employment creation?

South Africa has the highest youth unemployment rate of all the countries considered. It also the most developed YECP ecosystem and is the only country that continues to exhibit a net positive youth unemployment trend. In addition, there are notable differences between how the other nation's address issues of youth unemployment, most notably the use of lower levels of government, extensive national service regimes, and simple low-capital technologies among rural youth.

4.6. How can the government's youth employment creation programmes be strengthened and upscaled to enhance the country's more inclusive economic growth?

The outcome of this section is a querying of whether the YECP, in their current form, should be strengthened and upscaled. Overall, this section presents recommendations on a workstream basis across the four workstreams of YECP. Generally, the recommendations centre on an increase in the public-private partnerships of YECP, a more integrated market-based approach, a refinement of KPIs towards labour market KPI such as the number of youths employed, or the period of employment for youths that participated in the programme.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Relevance

The South African YECP ecosystem is characterised by extensive policy instruments. This was further corroborated and confirmed in the benchmarking analysis conducted. Yet, despite this extensively developed policy ecosystem, the youth unemployment rate in South Africa has continued to increase. This is an indication that the policy instruments are either ineffective or targeting the wrong components of the ecosystem.

As mentioned, the continuous rise in youth unemployment is evidence that the underlying issues contributing to the phenomenon are being inadequately addressed. For this reason, there is a serious need to consider the entire approach to the issue altogether – evidently the current ideology is not providing resolution.

Based on Table 6.6 – it is evident that the YECP are driven by a litany of different policy items – this is not in itself problematic as a heterogeneous array of policy items likely provides sound coverage of various interests – however, it does imply that there are several differing groups

of interests driving various programmes. This would generally be considered a good outcome for the YECP ecosystem. However, what is concerning is the level of programmes – 5 of the 12 – that are not clearly linked to some policy instrument. This finding raises concerns, as it is thus indiscernible what the driving force of the respective programmes are, and therefore, difficult to discern the effectiveness of these programmes.

The assessment in Table 6.7 provides an overview of the specificity and measurability of the objectives outlined in the NDP to 2030 (youth centric objectives) and NYP to 2030. The fact that some of these objectives can be reasonably labelled as non-specific & un-measurable is a concern as these are guiding instruments that must convey concise objectives and goals.

5.2. Effectiveness

The design of YECP does warrant consideration and assessment. Based on the research done in developing the report the following can be stated:

- 1. Design nature:** This evaluates whether the programmes are focused on the supply side of the labour market or the demand side of the labour market. It is evident from the above that the focus is typically on the supply side with limited demand side interaction or focus.
- 2. Design type:** The design type speaks to the manner in which the programmes effect the changes it wishes to see. In this case, most of the programmes focus on skills development of the youth – effectively enhancing employability through education. There is a marginal focus on the other three aspects – this is something to consider in future.

The final assessment of the level to which YECP are contributing to the creation of sustainable long-term employment in South Africa is as follows:

- 1. Employment contribution:** Whilst YEC programmes do contribute to employment creation, it is not apparent that this is sustainable or long-term employment. This issue has been clarified to some extent with the analysis of YECP participant survey data but presently, the YEC programmes cannot be stated as contributing towards sustainable long-term employment.
- 2. Programme effectiveness:** At a programme level, most of the programmes have not been consistently effective. Several of the programmes are victims of a lack of targets – or provision of said targets – and it should be noted that this is concerning as these programmes – given their public status – are likely dependent on budgeting and budgeted items of which the number of youths is almost certainly an aspect. Every effort was made to collect this data and – if it does exist – then the difficulties faced in obtaining the data are part and parcel of the general lack of M&E – which is only as effective as it is available, and
- 3. Programme focus:** The general developmental philosophy and focus of the programmes needs to be reconsidered. From a strategic vantage point, it is possible to discern the general direction of development and the developmental philosophy. In this regard the programmes share similarities that are indicative of a general sense of YECP ecosystem development.
 - a. Design:** Most of the programmes are supply side oriented and focused on the enhancement of employment characteristics of youth, this may not be effective as the issue could likely be that there are few new job openings each year – regardless

of the level employability of the youth applicants – there simply are not any new jobs.

- b. **Type:** The type of programme is largely skills development which focuses on employability of the youth and as stated above, is likely not as severe a constrain as the lack of new jobs. In addition, there are two issues here to consider:
 - i. **State of South African education:** The need to provide for improved skills amongst youth must, in part, be an indication of a failing schooling system. There is a need to question why youths – assuming they pass through the schooling system – require further training and skills and to what extent the schooling system should be addressing this. Each year of schooling can be viewed as an opportunity cost on production for the nation and as such, efforts should be made to optimise the period in formal education.
 - ii. **Work done versus work observed:** Many of the programmes are focused on imparting skills to then provide for an improved employability but the extent to which this is actually the case needs to be ascertained. There is a likelihood the skills and systems being implemented and taught at the YEC programme level differ from industry practices as they may not be linked to industry – given that they are not being affected within an industry related business or entity – this raises the question as to the efficacy of any skills programme that is not driven by a private – industry operating firm – in which market incentives drive the skills development.

There does appear to be a need within the YECP ecosystem to evolve and change in some of the aspects listed above. It is certain that the focus on the supply side must be counterbalanced with a more formidable push on the demand – in this context this means addressing blockages to employment and the and certainly deregulation and expansion of private business interests.

5.3. Sustainability

Lastly, considerations are provided, per workstream, on the cumulative requirement to address youth unemployment through each of the services provided by the different workstreams. These are briefly conveyed by workstream below:

1. **Knowledge services workstream:** Given this efficiency spend, to provide knowledge services programmes services to all the unemployed youth in the most recent period (2023) would require R50 586 547 910 .This would require funding 7.4 times greater for a single year than the total funding allocation to knowledge empowerment services for the evaluation period, and 52.5 times more spending than the average annual expenditure of the workstream.
2. **Skills development workstream:** At this efficiency spend, R214 968 274 760.00 would be required to provide training and skills development to the reported youth unemployed in the 2023 period. This is currently 3.7 times more than has been directed at the training and skills development ecosystem over the evaluation period and 29.7 times higher than the average annual spend on the training and skills development workstream .
3. **Employment services workstream:** The efficiency spend of the work opportunities programmes amounts to R21 061.57 per youth, this would require a total budget of R99 979 272 790.00 to provide work opportunities for the unemployed youth in the 2023 period. This is 1.6 times greater than the total budget allocated to the workstream over the evaluation period and 11 times greater than the annual average budget

allocated to the workstream. In other words, the budget would have to be increased by 11 times to meet the current level of youth unemployment in the country as of 2023, **and**

4. **SMME development workstream:** A total budget of R50.235 billion has been directed at SMME support services workstream over the evaluation period. This equates to an annual average spend of R7 176 433 459.43 and would require a total budget of R417 634 081 910.00 to provide all the unemployed youth in 2023 with the same support services. This is 8.3 times more than has been allocated over the evaluation period and 58.2 times more than is currently allocated on an annual basis. The efficiency spend of the SMME support services amounts to R87 978.53 per youth over the period.

The above resourcing and budgetary considerations have evident implications for the sustainability and likely impact of the YECP ecosystem moving forward. It must be stated that the above points are not an endorsement of increased funding for YECP; They are a hypothetical indication of the magnitude of increase in budget that would be required to “adequately resource” these workstreams to address the YECP issue.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Institutional arrangement

R1.

The failure of local government to play a more relevant role in youth development is evident. There is a need to resolve issues at the local government level and by so doing, create the environment within which **YECP** can be **locally administered**. It is recommended that South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) be considered in this regard and that an increased proportion of YECP are developed and implemented at the local government level.

YECP Formulation: Demand versus Supply side

R2.

The focus on the supply side of the youth labour market is evident. Given the state of youth unemployment and the length of time for which YECP have been operational in South Africa and the YECP ecosystem has existed, a newer approach must be taken. This approach must be **demand-side focused** and must focus on metrics such as number of private jobs created, number of private businesses developed, amount of Foreign Direct Investment secured, and so on. YECP must be **reoriented** from **supply side mechanics to demand side**, if not entirely, then at least partially. An increased incidence of the number of YECP with demand side KPIs as well as increased number of private-public partnerships (PPP). This policy position should be adopted at the national level initially.

YECP Formulation: Development model

R3.

The developmental model of YECP should evolve to a smaller public purse, a faster rate of workplace evolution, a realisation of the importance of demand side focus and the absolute need to involve private industry in a realistic manner – i.e., provides the appropriate incentive for industry to want to play a role in the YECP. In effect, YECP should be pushed to engage in more **public-private partnerships** and **align** more with **industry** and the **market**. There should be an increase in the number of YECP that are registered as PPPs.

YECP Formulation: Exit Pathways

R4.

Prioritise the creation of **exit opportunities** for programme participants, as the majority of programmes provide skills development and training but do not provide a clear pathway for participants to gain permanent employment going forward. There should be an increase in the number of exit pathways in YECs as well as the number of youths that acquire jobs through these exist pathways. Potential rebates and incentives for private sector firms that onboard YECP participants can be considered.

Financial resource planning

R5.

YECP are typically underfunded. In the current context of South African public finances, an expansion of funding cannot be made as part of a set of serious recommendations. However, an **aggregation of funding** through the closure of certain YECP and **reallocation** of said funding can certainly put forward. This can be done on the basis of the level of M&E available from those YECP and thus effective incentives enforced. A reduction in the number of YECP operating at the various levels of national government with a consolidation of funding.

Legislative framework: Policy Environment

R6.

The policy environment in South Africa is relatively convoluted and the documentation tends to span too broad a period. It is recommended that the level of **national policy** making be **reduced, distilled** to the **provinces** and **districts** to a greater degree and that the period over which these documents focus be no more than **five (5) years** and **preferably four (4)** – aligning with the Treasury MTSF periods.

Legislative framework: SMARTness of Objectives within policy

R7.

YECP and policy within the ecosystem must present objectives. In addition, these objectives must exhibit:

- a. Specificity.
- b. Measurability.
- c. Achievability.
- d. Relevant, and
- e. Time-Bound.

Whilst the above are sometimes exhibited in the various YECP and policy documentation there is certainly a need to reiterate the need for this and focus on it. YECP objectives should be specific and measurable when assessed at random.

Partnerships

R8.

Encourage networking between various government departments, as in some cases different departments are running very similar programmes with the same goals/objectives, target groups, and so on. Increased discussions and collaborations could avoid these intersectional

programmes. The focus should be on reducing the siloed nature of YECPs within the ecosystem. There should be an increased number of joint funded YECP.

Dissemination of knowledge: Online systems and data availability

R9.

Regular updates to information **available online**, as programmes which no longer exist or are no longer being implemented present as though they are still running. New programmes are not easily found, or no adequate information is available. All YECP should have a **strong** and **active online presence**. There should be an increase in the accessibility of YECP online.

Dissemination of knowledge: Programme documentation

R10.

Encourage **programme documentation** (programme aims/mandate/SOP should be created and approved prior to implementation). All YECP should have a clear and available set of strategic documentation outlining the objectives, TOC, and intended outcomes as well as activities and processes to achieve these outcomes. All YECP should have strategic documentation available.

Skills development

R11.

The evident focus on skills development needs to be addressed. It is apparent that this is a large component of the Theory of Change for most YECP. Whilst this research has not assessed the extent to which this skills development has been successful, from a macroeconomic perspective it is evident: Youth unemployment has worsened despite increased provision of skills and funding for skills. Addressing this issue requires an intimate knowledge of the fact that the modern workspace evolves quickly and a skills development programme that is not integrated into a market-oriented entity is not likely to be as effective as one that is. This undermines the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of many of the YECP – if the youth graduating from the skills development programme do not have the skills (or are not as skilled) as others in the market their employability has not improved. A **review** of the focus on **skills development needs** to be **undertaken** and ties into the need to focus on the demand side and not supply side of the youth labour market. A review of the effectiveness of skills development programmes in reducing youth unemployment should be undertaken and issued.

Monitoring and evaluation

R12.

It is certainly apparent that there is insufficient M&E occurring within the YECP ecosystem. This is concerning both in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of these programmes – which is not possible without M&E data – and in terms of the level of transparency and accountability of said programmes. In short, it is **advised** that **disincentives** are put in place for those YECP that **do not keep appropriate** M&E data and incentives for those that do. An increase in the number of YECP that keep appropriate M&E data should be noted.

SUMMARY REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background

Youth Employment Creation Programmes (YCEP) are government's public employment programmes (PEP) specifically aimed at addressing youth unemployment. They do so by primarily providing one of four workstream services: (1) knowledge services, (2) skills development services, (3) employment services, and (4) SMME development services. These YCEP are typically focused on the supply side of the youth labour market and are concerned with the employability of youths.

Though youth employment programmes have created numerous employment opportunities, it is uncertain whether these programmes have achieved their goals in terms of their mandates. Furthermore, as a collective it is evident that the overarching objective of addressing youth unemployment is not presently being achieved, this is clear when considering the rate of youth unemployment across South Africa and recent trends. Overall, it is clear there is a need to evaluate whether government youth employment programmes are achieving their objectives, whether they are designed to realise their impacts, and what issues/limitations they are experiencing to develop recommendations to enhance such programmes in the future.

1.2 Background to the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the design, effectiveness and efficiency of youth employment creation programmes (YCEP) between 2016 and 2022¹. The study aims to determine whether YCEP are achieving their objectives, whether they are designed to realise their impacts, and what issues/limitations they are experiencing to develop recommendations to enhance such programmes in the future. The evaluation further seeks to assess youth employment access from various government youth employment programmes to ensure maximum benefit and value for money.

The results/outcomes of the evaluation will primarily serve to inform various government departments to:

1. Improve current policy and implementation where there are gaps;
2. Improve accountability, decision-making and performance;
3. Ensure maximum impact and value for money of support programmes;
4. Ensure strategic alignment and improve coordination;
5. Ensure proper alignment of government youth employment creation initiatives;
6. Develop customised indicators to enhance reporting on the relevant outcomes; **and**
7. Contribute to the achievement of the National Development Plan (NDP).

1.3 Methodology

The methodology consisted of:

¹ Note: the period of the evaluation was extended from 2016 to 2021 to 2016 to 2022 during the inception phase of the study. Thus, the period of evaluation differs from the original TOR.

- A documentary study and literature review, including an international benchmarking study;
- Development of a Master TOC, including a narrative and logframe;
- Development of a master research instrument to be used in the primary data collection process;
- Analysis of supplementary data available on various YECP, which included the selection of qualifying programmes for deeper research – programmes were selected based on a number of criteria including whether they were considered to be youth-focused, implemented over the study period and have not undergone evaluation over the study period;
- Primary data collection, which included engagement of various government officials and programme managers; as well as a YECP participant survey deployed to more than 3500 individuals for completion (instruments and outcomes can be found in Annexure A, B and C – which were based off the Master Research Instrument in Annexure D).
- A programme-level/case study analysis to enrich the research and subsequent findings and recommendations.
- A validation workshop involving a variety of stakeholder representatives, DPME representatives and senior representatives of the evaluation team.
- In addition, the DPME convened a working meeting to discuss the draft final report. It involved DWYPD representatives, various government department officials, peer reviewers, and members of the evaluation team.

2 A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE

According to the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME, 2014), a TOC explains the processes or pathways of how a programme's activities and outputs are expected to result in the intended outcomes and impacts. A TOC also describes the required inputs – staffing, institutions, mechanisms, and resources – for an interventions results to be realised.

Using insights from the policy analysis and benchmarking exercise, the figure below illustrates the Master TOC which was developed for YECP in South Africa.

With the goal of reducing unemployment, poverty, and inequality, the Master TOC for YECPs is articulated as follows:

IF

YECP makes use of its resources to provide employment services, skills development and training services, knowledge empowerment services and SMME development services

SO THAT

The youth become educated, trained, and knowledgeable in how and where to search for employment

AND

acquires employment, builds experience, and receives income support

AND/OR

Create and develop SMMEs

THEN

The youth become more empowered and confident when searching for jobs, as well as improve their employability and work readiness

AND IF

YECP also provides job placement

SO THAT

The youth exiting the programme finds sustainable employment

THEN

Labour absorption of the youth in the economy increases

AND

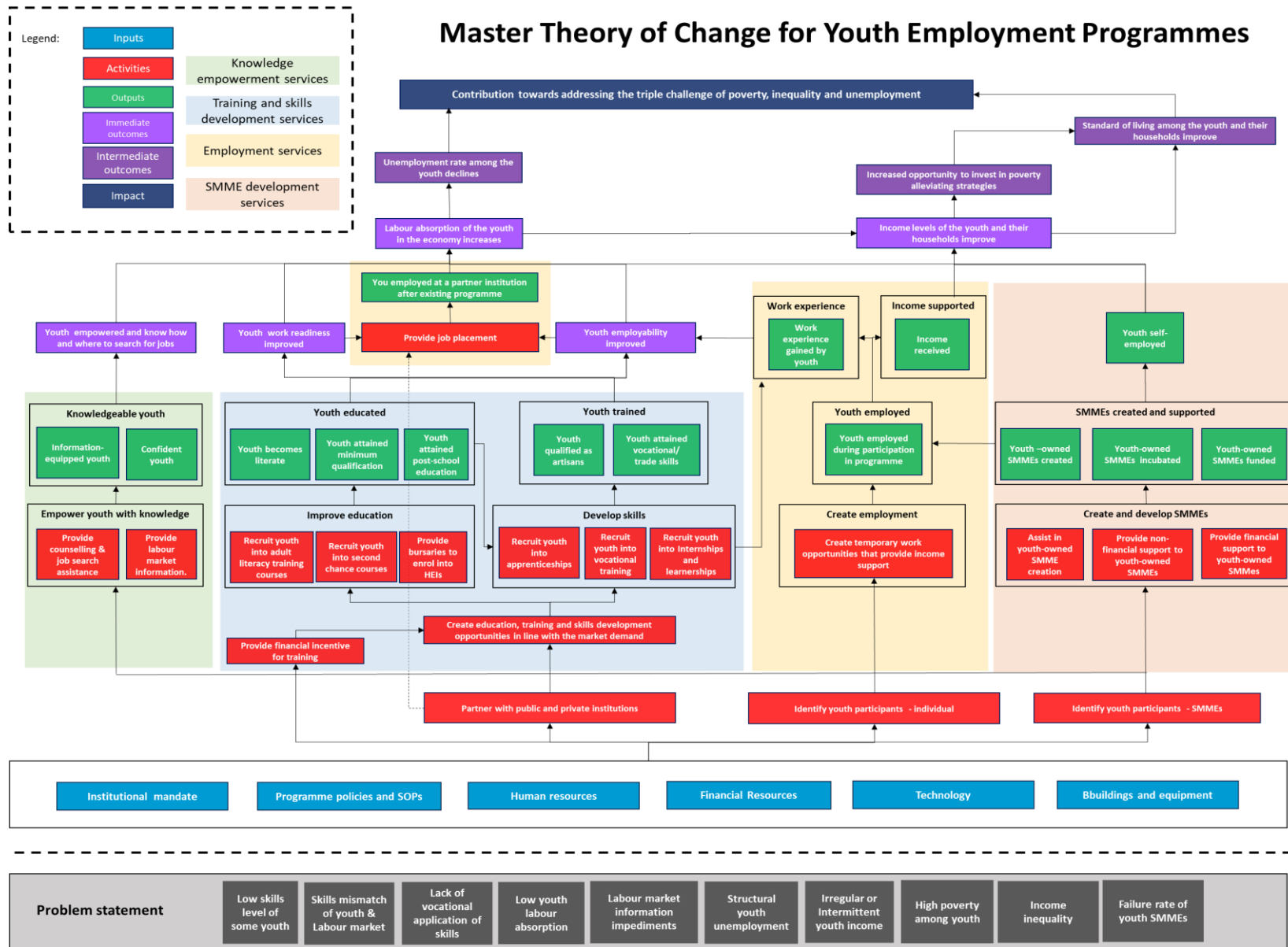
Income levels of the youth and their households improve

RESULTING IN

The decline in the unemployment rate among the youth, increased opportunity for the youth to invest in poverty-reducing strategies, and the improvement in the standard of living of the youth and their households

WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS

Addressing the triple challenge of poverty, inequality, and unemployment in South Africa.



3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Unemployment occurs when the labour resources are idle in an economy which causes a decline in national production (Fields, 2023). It refers to a situation in which working-age individuals are without paid employment, are available and actively seeking work, and are willing and able to work (Fields, 2023). Stats SA (2022) provides the following Official definition of unemployed persons:

Official definition of unemployed in South Africa

Unemployed individual who at the time of a survey:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Were aged 15–64 years; andb) Were not employed; andc) Actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks preceding the survey; andd) Were available for work, i.e. would have been able to start work or a business in the reference week	OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Were aged 15–64 years; andb) Had not actively looked for work, butc) Had a job or business to start at a definite date in the future; andd) Were available.
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(Stats SA, 2022)

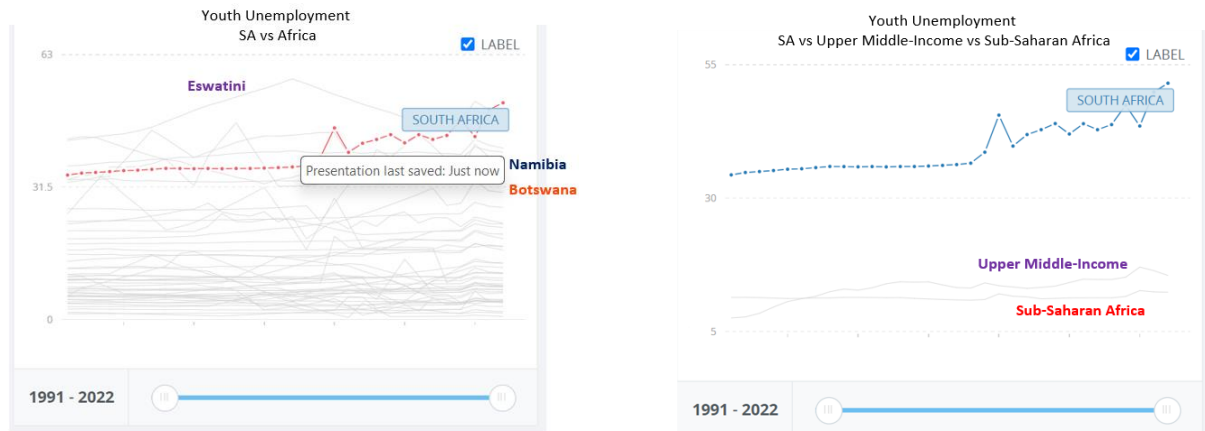
Young individuals entering the labour market are more susceptible to unemployment than their older counterparts for this reason, youth unemployment tends to be considered in its own right aside from general unemployment.

The definition of youth in South Africa as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 dates back to the National Youth Commission Act No 9 of 1996 as well as the African Youth Charter of 2006. The exact definition has been followed in developing national youth policies starting in 2000. The initial rationale for setting 35 years as the upper age limit for the youth was to follow an inclusive approach taking into account unique demographic and economic conditions influenced by historical context and economic factors. Although two decades have passed since the initial decision on the upper age limit, due to the need to continue addressing historical imbalances in the country (The Presidency, 2009), the upper age limit has not yet been revised lower.

3.1 Youth unemployment in South Africa

South Africa has one of the worst youth unemployment rates globally with the most recent youth unemployment rate at 51.52% - which is only for those youths between 15 to 24 (recall in South Africa the official youth age bracket is 15-34 – as such this unemployment rate is lower than it will be in actuality).

This unemployment rate is higher than all other African nations (although there is room to argue this is due to lack of appropriate national accounting in these African nations). Regardless, the unemployment trend in South Africa is significantly greater than the youth unemployment trend seen in comparable Upper Middle-Income countries as well as sub-Saharan Africa – as evidenced below.



Source: (World Bank, 2022).

When compared to the rest of Africa, South Africa's youth unemployment rate is clearly much higher than the other African nations. There is certainly an aspect of the above comparison that is due to the state of national accounting agencies in other African nations. Regardless, South Africa certainly has a higher youth unemployment rate than most comparative African nations.

When compared to the other upper middle-income countries it is evident that South Africa has a higher youth unemployment rate than its counterparts. This is both a concern and yet expected. This outcome is concerning given the fact when compared to other countries with a similar GDP per capita, South Africa has such an exceedingly high youth unemployment rate. This implies some form of economic deviation between South Africa and other comparable economic countries. However, this outcome is also not unexpected given the basic metric that provides for this grouping – which is that of GDP per capita, which of course does not take into account other nuanced metrics of national development.

South Africa's youth unemployment has been elevated from the inception of democratic South Africa with the rate being as high as 30% from 1994. Some of the possible reasons for this are listed below:

- 1. Low level of education among the youth:** In 2021, more than half a million learners left school before finishing matric, and just under 100 000 learners failed matric in the same year. This lack of formal education prevents them from enrolling in programmes that would enable them to obtain higher education or trade skills, limiting their employability.
- 2. Lack of labour market information:** There is a communication gap between the labour market and youth, making it difficult for both parties to connect. The labour market struggles to find the right candidates based on selection criteria, while the youth struggle to find available opportunities.
- 3. Skills mismatch between supply and demand:** The skills mismatch issue is raised in the Skills Supply and Demand in South Africa Report, which states "The available data suggest some specific mismatches between demand and supply. One such mismatch involves the considerable increases in unemployment among graduates in particular fields of study. Another is the mismatch between the field of study and labour market destination." (Development Policy Research Unit, pg. 166, 2020). The evident implication here is that there is a continuous output of skilled youth in skills areas already satiated at the labour market level. In turn, there is a lack of skilled youth in

other skills areas of the labour market that are in deficit so far as employees are concerned.

4. **Lack of work experience:** The lack of expertise among youths, particularly in comparison to older and certifiably competent competition, results in youth either being under-employed or unemployed due to the opportunity cost of onboarding the youth (Branson, De Lannoy, & Brynde, 2019).
5. **Low youth labour absorption:** The youth (15-24) have the lowest labour absorption rate compared to other age groups in South Africa. This means that the economy struggles to absorb the economically active young population, further exacerbating the youth employment problem (Stats SA, 2021). This is a significant problem and likely the most pressing in the list.
6. **Failure of youth SMMEs:** It is suggested that South Africa has one of the highest SMME failure rates in the world (BusinessTech, 2021). The inexperience and limited capital of young entrepreneurs contribute to this problem. Success in the SMME sector is often associated with age and experience.
7. **Irregular or intermittent youth income:** The high rates of youth unemployment, coupled with the fact that the approximately 46.3% of the youth are not in employment, education or training (NEET) (Stats SA, 2023) suggest that youth spend large segments of time unemployed or in a state of intermittent employment. In addition, evidence is growing that non-standard, casual, and part-time work is rising (Mncayi & Meyer, 2021). This implies that these youth are not earning an income and that when incomes are made, they are intermittent or short-term.

The issue of youth unemployment in South Africa cannot be levelled at any one issue. There are various potential reasons for the persistent youth unemployment trends including:

1. **Low level of education among the youth**
2. **Lack of labour market information**
3. **Skills mismatch between supply and demand**
4. **Lack of work experience**
5. **Low youth labour absorption**
6. **Failure of youth SMMEs**
7. **Irregular or intermittent youth income**

These factors combine to make the youth a vulnerable portion of the population, typically resulting in a public sector direct interventionist approach to addressing this problem.

In summation, youth unemployment in South Africa has not only been a persistent challenge in the past years but has significantly worsened. High unemployment levels profoundly negatively affect both the youth and the national economy. Negative economic and societal impacts include losses related to economic and community growth, output/productivity potential, human relations, freedom of decision-making, and opportunities. Other adverse effects include increased crime rates, poor economic performance, extreme joblessness and poverty, and increased potential for political instability (Mlatsheni & Leibbrandt, 2011; De Lannoy A. , Graham, Patel, & Leibbrandt, 2018; NYDA, 2015). Though unemployment is considered one of the triple challenges facing South Africa, stimulating employment and

solving the youth unemployment crisis has the potential to mitigate related challenges of poverty and inequality.

To understand the approach the South African government has been taking to address the challenges of youth unemployment, the following section discusses the government’s position and discusses interventions outlined in various policy and strategic documents. By so doing, this Literature Review attempts to develop a broad understanding of the general dynamics at play in the public sector of South Africa in so far as those interventions and initiatives aimed at youth unemployment. Africa in so far as those interventions and initiatives aimed at youth unemployment.

3.2 YECP Ecosystem

The country's approach to addressing youth unemployment can be viewed from an ecosystem perspective. These include the international policy environment, which influences the domestic policies environment, which in turn is applied by various government institutions to develop and implement youth development programmes and interventions.

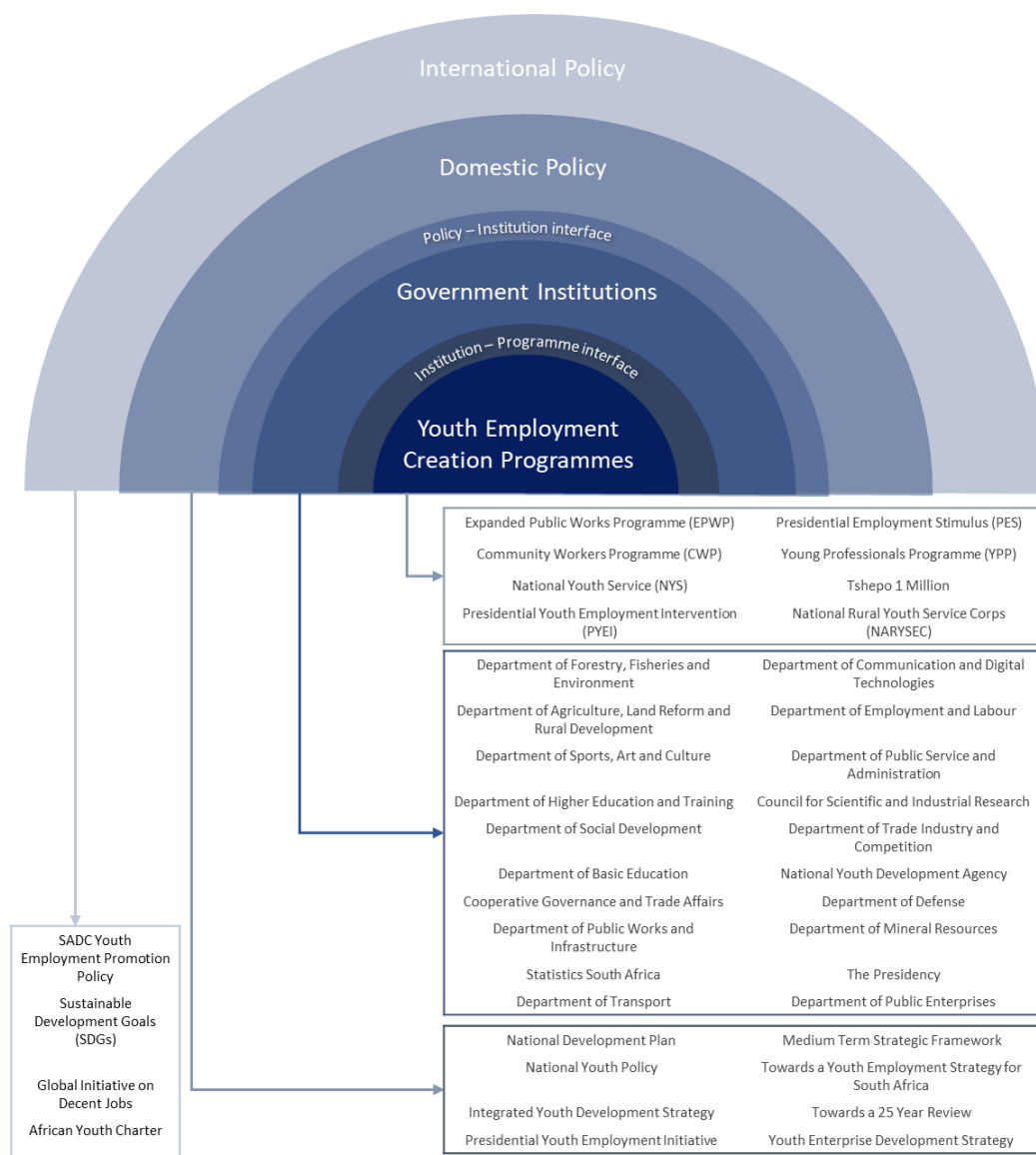


Figure 3-1: YECP Ecosystem in South Africa

3.2.1 Youth Employment Creation Programmes in South Africa

South African government has implemented YECPs to address the country's high levels of youth unemployment. These programmes aim to equip young individuals with skills, create job opportunities, and foster entrepreneurship. An initial list of YECPs was provided by DPME that contained possible 106 YECPs, the list was expanded based on additional secondary research to a total of 173 potential programmes. Information about these programmes in the public domain appears scarce; therefore, the project team had initiated a survey to collect details from each responsible department. Due to the lack of data, it is difficult to determine how many of these programmes are still active and what are the main components of these programmes, i.e., whether they include skills development, work opportunity creation, placement, entrepreneurship development, etc. The current level of information, however, provides with some insight into the distribution of programmes in terms of public institutions. Which. Further research and analysis reduced the list of 173 potential programmes to 51 programmes that are considered to be YECPs.

Considering the 51 YECPs identified as part of the desktop analysis, 10 or 19.6% are implemented between the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI). These include a wide variety of programmes covering, entrepreneurial skills development, facilities management training, internships, and work readiness training. The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) followed with a total of 4 YECPs which cover mentorships, work readiness training, skills development and employment opportunities for the youth.

This YECP ecosystem is critical in evaluating the national imperative of addressing youth unemployment. The various components that are active within each of the different segments of the ecosystem interact to produce the overall outcomes desired by the public sector. By understanding the general aspects of the ecosystem (such as domestic policy) as well as the various specific instances at play within each segment (such as the formation of the National Youth Development Agency through the National Youth Development Agency Act) a holistic and informed assessment of the public sector effort to address youth unemployment can be developed.

4 KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 What youth employment creation programmes are currently being offered by the South African government (inventory of youth job creation programmes) at local, provincial, and national levels?

The research identified 280 programmes in South Africa that were targeting youth during the period between 2016 and 2022. These programmes differ in terms of their focus, geographical spread, ownership and services.

Table 4-1: YEC programme inventory: Three tiers of government

Location	National/Provincial	District	Local	Total
Eastern Cape	5	13	31	49
Free State	2	4	15	21
Gauteng	1	10	7	18
KwaZulu-Natal	3	11	21	35
Limpopo	3	5	12	20
Mpumalanga	2	3	15	20
Northern Cape	0	6	17	23
North-West	3	4	8	15
Western Cape	5	7	16	28
National	51	N/A	N/A	51
Total	51-75²	63	142	280

From the above, it is evident that 280 programmes were uncovered in the South African YEC programme ecosystem. Of this 50% were at the local level, 23% were at the district level, and between 18% and 27% were at the national or provincial level. The following should be noted:

- 1. Nature of local & district YECP:** A notable number of the projects at the district and local levels were internships. Whilst projects and programmes of this nature have been included in this report's definition of YECP it is necessary to note that many of these are indeed internships. Additionally, it was not possible to ascertain whether they were paid internships or not and therefore, several of this YECP are likely less employment centric than it would appear.
- 2. Level of information:** There is certainly a paucity of information available on these programmes across each level of government. None of the local level programmes were utilised in this assessment as none had enough valid information available to make this possible. The same can be said for the district level programmes. It is a precursor as to the level of monitoring and evaluation data and culture within the YEC ecosystem of South Africa that this assessment was not able to gain enough

² A range is provided here as it not apparent if there some overlap in the programmes identified at this level and whether some of the programmes at the provincial level are national level programmes just branded slightly differently or else the same programme.

information for an assessment of 15 programmes and had to settle for 11, several of which have estimations and assumptions due to the scarcity of data.

3. **Status of YECP:** The status of these YECP was not discernible from the assessment conducted. The value of 280 YECP certainly contains defunct or non-active programmes, however, it was difficult to discern the status of these YECP and therefore, the inventory is a broad indication, **and**
4. **Source of funding and Prerogative:** The funding provided to programmes and the prerogative of the programmes – particularly at provincial, district, and local levels was difficult to ascertain. For this reason, there may be several programmes that of which have been classed as provincial but are in fact national. Again, the status of monitoring and evaluation systems, as well as general level of transparency within the YECP ecosystem is concerning as these are issues that should be relatively easy to discern.

The above issues and factors were confronted throughout the analysis and raised whilst the inventory gathering exercise was undertaken and informed the final recommendations of this impact evaluation.

4.2 Are the existing government programmes designed and adequately resourced to contribute towards reducing youth unemployment?

The key findings pertaining to the design and resourcing of YECP, informed through programme-level evaluations and secondary research include:

1. **Design & Resourcing of Knowledge Empowerment Services Programmes:** The purpose of knowledge empowerment services programmes is to facilitate the placement of unemployed youths into various positions within the economy. These programmes require human and financial resources, as well as industry insights and contacts. Two assessed programs, Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme and Tshepo 1 Million, target to empower youths with knowledge of job search and application processes. The effectiveness of these programs varies, with one surpassing targets and the other falling short. Cumulatively, knowledge services programs have been allocated R6.74 billion over the evaluation period, with an average annual expenditure of R963.52 million. However, to provide these services to all unemployed youths in 2023 would require R50.59 billion, indicating significant underfunding.
2. **Design & Resourcing of Skills Development Programmes:** Skills development programmes aim to train youths in demanded areas to enhance their employability. These programmes typically require financial resources and partnerships with other entities. Several programmes under this workstream have been assessed, with mixed effectiveness. Despite a total expenditure of R57.86 billion over the evaluation period, the required budget to provide skills development to all unemployed youths in 2023 is R214.97 billion, significantly exceeding current allocations.
3. **Design & Resourcing of Employment Services Programmes:** Employment services programs provide job opportunities to youths to gain work experience and income. These programs combine institutional mandates with human and financial resources to create work opportunities. The effectiveness of these programs varies, with some surpassing targets and others falling short. While a total budget of R62.81 billion has been allocated to this workstream, R99.98 billion would be required to provide work opportunities to all unemployed youths in 2023.

4. **Design & Resourcing of SMME Support Services Programmes:** SMME support services programs aim to support youth-owned businesses through various means, including financial support and skills development. The effectiveness of the programmes is less clear due to limited available data. The total budget allocated to this workstream was around R50.24 billion, but around R417.63 billion would be required to provide support to all unemployed youths in 2023.
5. **Workstream Comparison:** Among the four workstreams, knowledge empowerment services have the lowest spend per youth, while work opportunities have the highest impact in terms of the number of youths affected. However, all workstreams face significant funding gaps to address the issue of youth unemployment adequately. Providing services to all unemployed youths in 2023 would require significant increases in budget allocations ranging from 1.6 to 58.2 times higher than current allocations. Despite these budgetary requirements, the effectiveness of many programs remains uncertain, indicating challenges in achieving meaningful outcomes for unemployed youths.

4.3 Is the suite of government programmes contributing to the broader country objectives of creating employment for the country's youth (sustainable job creation)?

In total the median number of jobs across the industries/sectors (within which YEC has been active) amounts of 8 793 199 – this is the median value between the employment value of 2012 and 2022. The number of work opportunities created over this period amounts to 4 633 523 – which when contrasted against the number of employment opportunities in the working economy is a significant proportion of the overall total – at 52.7% of the total annual jobs. However, what is being compared in Table 6.5 is the total cumulative work opportunities created by the YEC programmes over 8 years against a single year of employment. The following is relevant:

$$YEC \text{ Annual work opportunities created} = \frac{4\,633\,523}{8} = 579\,190$$

it is estimated that the sample of YEC programmes, on an annual basis aggregated across time, have provided work opportunities to the tune of 579 190 a year, which equates to 6.5% per annum. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that these work opportunities are sustainable or long-term, thus whilst the programmes are contributing toward having youths in the workplace – or working under conditions/using skills appropriate to the workspace – it cannot be said that that they are creating or contributing to the creation of sustainable long-term employment.

Whilst YEC programmes do contribute to employment it is not apparent that this is sustainable or long-term employment. This issue may be clarified to some extent with the analysis of YEC participant survey data but presently, the YEC programmes cannot be stated as contributing towards sustainable long-term employment.

4.4 Are the government YECs aligned in relation to the overarching legislative frameworks/plans?

Prior to discussing alignment of the various programmes to policy it is worth noting what the present state of policy is in the South African YEC programme ecosystem.

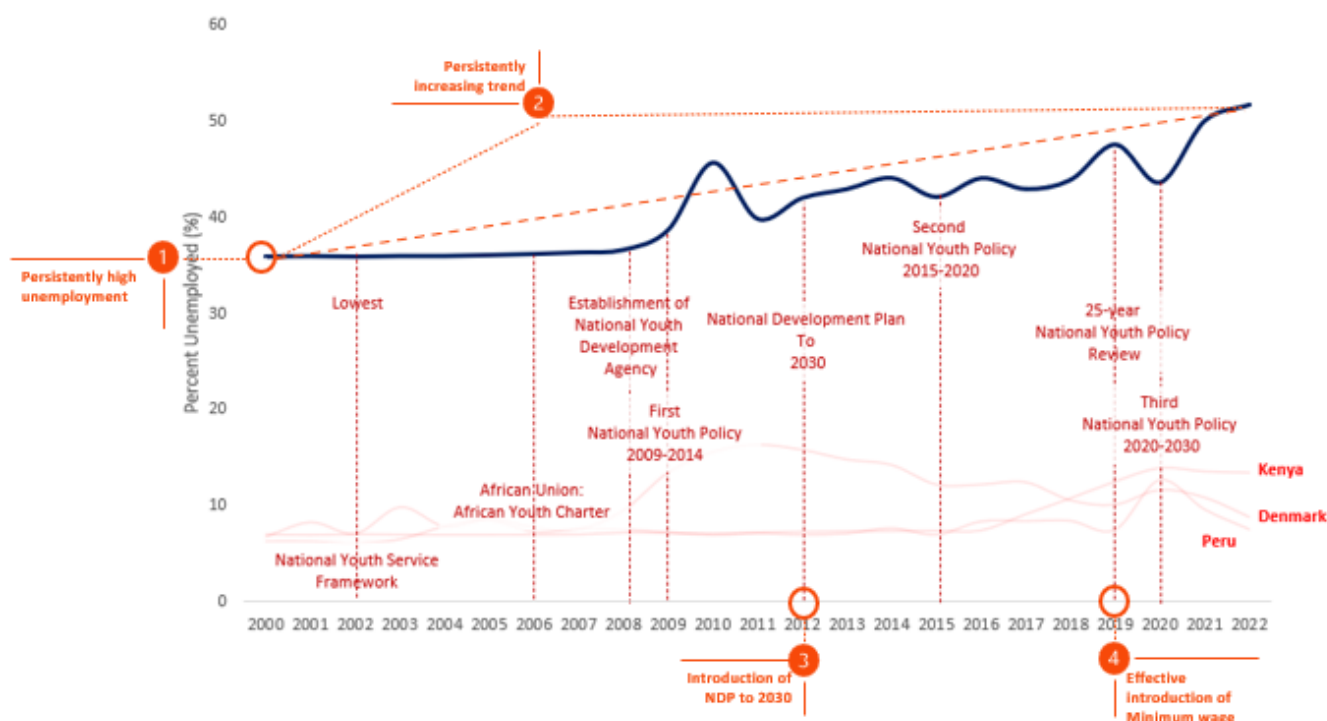


Figure 4-1: South Africa youth policy breakdown

The above graph provides insight into the youth unemployment rate in conjunction with the various policies that have been introduced over time. The first policy that was deemed to have relevance to the current YEC ecosystem is that of the “National Youth Service Framework” established in 2002 the most recent policy item is the “Third National Youth Policy 2020-2030”. It should be noted that there are least eight (8) separate policy items that have been developed in the South African YEC policy space that are either directed at the issue of youth unemployment or in some way affect it.

In conducting research on various YECP, the following observations were made in answering the evaluation question:

1. **Extensive policy:** The South African YEC ecosystem is characterised by extensive policy instruments. This was further corroborated and confirmed in the benchmarking analysis provided in previous section. Yet, despite this extensively developed policy ecosystem, the youth unemployment rate has continued to increase. This is an indication that the policy instruments are either ineffective or targeting the wrong components of the ecosystem.
2. **Increasing youth unemployment:** As mentioned, the continuous rise in youth unemployment is evidence that the underlying issues contributing to the phenomenon are not being adequately addressed. For this reason, there a serious need to consider the entire approach to the issue altogether – evidently the current ideology is not providing resolution.
3. **Principal policy for YEC programmes:** it is evident that the YEC programmes are driven by a litany of different policy items – this is not in itself problematic as a heterogenous array of policy items likely provides sound coverage of various interests

– however, it does imply that there are several differing groups of interests driving various programmes. This would generally be considered a good outcome for the YEC ecosystem. However, what is concerning is the level of programmes – 5 of the 12 – that are not clearly linked to some policy instrument. This raises concerns as it is not clearly discernible what the driving force of the programmes is and therefore, difficult to discern the effectiveness of these programmes.

Given the above, and in response to the evaluation question, it is evident that to some extent the YEC ecosystem in South Africa does align to various policy and legislation. In addition, it is evident that that to some extent there is a lack of alignment. What is certain is that:

1. There is a diversity of policy in the ecosystem – as evidenced by eight different policy items in relation to youth unemployment.
2. Some of this policy is not specific or measurable and should be reconsidered.
3. To date, these policy items have failed to yield a completed outcome – youth unemployment has not improved, it has worsened.
4. The approach to youth unemployment within the YEC ecosystem should be reconsidered.
5. The M&E culture and practices of the YEC ecosystem should be considered and whether the programmes adhere to PAIA ascertained.

4.5 How does South Africa compare with other countries (countries of similar economy) on government youth employment creation?

South Africa has the highest youth unemployment rate of all the countries considered. It also the most developed YECP ecosystem and is the only country that continues to exhibit a net positive youth unemployment trend. In addition, there are notable differences between how the other nation’s address issues of youth unemployment, most notably the use of lower levels of government, extensive national service regimes, and simple low-capital technologies among rural youth. Results of the best practice scan can be found in **Annexure H**.

One of the key findings of the best practice scan/benchmarking analysis was found in the comparison of South African YECP and other countries through a consideration of the efficiency spend of the South African YECP against foreign counterparts.

Table 4-2: Efficiency spend comparison: South Africa versus

Programme/Research	Spend per Youth
Industrial Parks Youth Jobs Created	R 2 774 049,22
Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino (2012) ³	R 936 846.03
Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme	R 570 125,43
World Bank Assessment	R 562 107.62 ⁴
Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme	R 76 111,33
Wamly website	R 60 000.00
Estimated Efficiency spend to resolve youth issue	R 27 828,24

³ (Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino, 2012) – converted from \$50 000.00 at spot rate on 31/01/24.

⁴ Based on a study that estimated the cost of creating a job was \$30 000.00 – converted to Rands at the spot rate on 31/01/24.

Programme/Research	Spend per Youth	
First Work Experience Premiers Advancement of Youth (PAY) Programme	R	25 000,00
Presidential Youth Initiative	R	23 635,43
Artisan Development Programme	R	21 466,49
Debut Fund	R	20 261,14
Capacity Building Programme	R	4 564,13
National Youth Service	R	1 512,39
Tshepo 1 Million	R	1 125,69
Second Chance programme	R	336,58

From the above it is clear that at the international level the cost of creating a job is far in excess of what the majority of YEC programmes are currently able to provide. This further corroborates the questions surrounding the sustainability and temporal nature of the various work opportunities created by the different YEC programmes in place. All three sources provided from an external stand point indicate that the cost of creating a job is at least R60 000.00 – this does not take into account the cost of then paying for that same job. Regardless, the act of creating employment is expensive – made increasingly so through various employment regulations and provisions which heightened the barrier to employment and often disincentivise the hiring of labour.

Regardless, South Africa's YEC ecosystem is typically underfunded compared to both the required domestic rate to meet youth unemployment as well as compared to international counterparts

4.6 How can government's YECs be strengthened and upscaled to enhance a more inclusive economic growth in the country?

The evaluation of YEC in South Africa reveals several key findings and recommendations, in relation to strengthening and upscaling employment programmes:

- 1. Inventory:** YEC exist at various levels of government and across all provinces but lack credible internal monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.
- 2. Design and Resourcing:** Most YEC focus on supply-side skills development rather than demand-side employment creation. YEC programmes are typically under-resourced, with efficiency spending per youth below the median.
- 3. Contribution to Broader Employment:** Lack of adequate M&E makes it difficult to assess YEC's contribution to sustainable long-term employment. YEC primarily focus on enhancing employability rather than direct employment.
- 4. Alignment to National Policy:** The alignment with national policies varies, with some programs exhibiting stronger alignment features than others. Both the National Development Plan (NDP) and National Youth Policy (NYP) lack specificity and measurability in their objectives.
- 5. Comparison to International YEC:** South African YEC differ from international counterparts in terms of championing, funding, and policy density.

Recommendations for Strengthening YEC include:

1. Empower local government involvement in youth development.
2. Shift focus towards demand-side strategies for job creation.
3. Address overemphasis on skills development by integrating programs with market-oriented entities.
4. Establish robust monitoring and evaluation protocols with incentives for compliance.
5. Implement incentive schemes for YECP staff to align with long-term employment goals.
6. Reallocate funding through program closures based on M&E effectiveness.
7. Streamline national policy-making, focusing on shorter-term objectives.
8. Ensure SMART objectives within policy documents for YECP.
9. Evolve the developmental model of YECP to align with market demands.

The following workstream observations and recommendations were made, taking into consideration the Master TOC:

1. **Knowledge Services YECP:** Consider outsourcing to private entities rather than internal development.
2. **Skills Development YECP:** Integrate with private sector bodies for market relevance, and focus on post-program employment metrics.
3. **Employment Services YECP:** Shift towards longer-term employment objectives and prioritize quality over quantity.
4. **SMME Development YECP:** Address high failure rates by focusing on broader issues affecting SMME sustainability rather than just youth-specific challenges.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Relevance & Effectiveness

The assessment of relevance was conducted at the policy level for the various YEC programs assessed. Relevance as set out in the criteria of assessment for this impact evaluation was to:

"... explore(s) the relevance of the programme to the needs and priorities of the target group or sector."

To this end, the policy outlining the YEC ecosystem was taken to be the priorities set for the target group, youth, or sector, the YEC ecosystem.

Given that the relevance criteria incorporated the ecosystem policy and objectives there is some overlap between the relevance criteria and effectiveness criteria. The effectiveness criteria sought to:

"...measure of the extent to which the programme achieves its objectives..."

Given that the evaluation was not primarily concerned with in-depth programme level evaluations, and that there was significant data gathering limitations in conducting various data the effectiveness was assessed in part by looking at programme level objectives, where possible, and in part by looking at the extent to which policy and planning objectives were being met by programme outcomes.

The level to which YEC programmes aligned with various policy items was ascertained and the following were discussed:

- 1. Extensive policy:** The South African YEC ecosystem is characterised by extensive policy instruments. This was further corroborated and confirmed in the benchmarking analysis which can be found in **Annexure H**. Yet, despite this extensively developed policy ecosystem, the youth unemployment rate has continued to increase. This is an indication that the policy instruments are either ineffective or targeting the wrong components of the ecosystem.
- 2. Increasing youth unemployment:** As mentioned, the continuous rise in youth unemployment is evidence that the underlying issues contributing to the phenomenon are not being adequately addressed. For this reason, there is a serious need to consider the entire approach to the issue altogether – evidently the current ideology is not providing resolution.
- 3. Principal policy for YEC programmes:** From the analysis it is evident that the YEC programmes are driven by a litany of different policy items – this is not in itself problematic as a heterogeneous array of policy items likely provides sound coverage of various interests – however, it does imply that there are several differing groups of interests driving various programmes. This would generally be considered a good outcome for the YEC ecosystem. However, what is concerning is the level of programmes – 5 of the 12 assessed – that are not clearly linked to some policy instrument. This raises concerns as it is not clearly discernible what the driving force of the programmes is and therefore, difficult to discern the effectiveness of these programmes, **and**
- 4. Nature of objectives:** The assessment in Table 6.7 provides an overview of the specificity and measurability of the objectives outlined in the NDP to 2030 (youth centric

objectives) and NYP to 2030. The fact that some of these objectives can be reasonably labelled as non-specific & un-measurable is a concern as these are guiding instruments that must convey concise objectives and goals.

- a. **Underlying systems:** The above is further compounded by the anecdotal evidence gathered during the research process by the team in so far as the status of the M&E systems and their accessibility by the public is concerned. This is discussed in Table 6.8 above.

5.2 Effectiveness & Efficiency

The assessment of effectiveness was also to consider:

“This aspect of the evaluation usually begins by looking at the actual objectives and then assessing whether these have been met. Importantly, it also looks at the factors that have influenced (or will influence) the attainment of objectives.”

Given this, the considerations around allocation of funding, use of said funding in relation to number of youths as well as the comparative metrics across different programmes and workstreams within the YEC ecosystem lent itself to an assessment of the effectiveness.

The efficiency component of the assessment considered:

“It measures the qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to the inputs. Some of the key questions asked in this regard include whether programme activities were cost-effective, whether the programmes were delivered on time and – significantly – whether the programmes were implemented in the most efficient way possible (i.e., compared to other alternative methods).”

The assessment of efficiency was conducted at multiple levels and within the limitations of both the data available to the evaluation as well as within the context of a systems level assessment. This primarily resulted in a consideration of the budgeting and throughput of youths from the programmes and in aggregate, at either a workstream level or at an ecosystem level.

In so far as the resourcing of YEC are concerned, it is estimated that the total required spend on youth unemployment would amount to around R1.032 billion over the period of 2016-2023. Over this period, the YEC ecosystem can be said to have received around R121 million. On this basis, it can be substantiated that the YEC ecosystem is under resourced in relation to the task at hand.

The design of YEC does warrant consideration and assessment. Based on the research done in developing the report the following can be stated:

1. **Design nature:** This evaluates whether the programmes are focused on the supply side of the labour market or the demand side of the labour market. It is evident from the above that the focus is typically on the supply side with limited demand side interaction or focus.
2. **Design type:** The design type speaks to the manner in which the programmes effect the changes it wishes to see. In this case, most of the programmes focus on skills development of the youth – effectively enhancing employability through education. There is a marginal focus on the other three aspects – this is something to consider moving forward.

The final assessment of the level to which YEC programmes are contributing to the creation of sustainable long-term employment in South Africa is as follows:

1. **Employment contribution:** Whilst YEC programmes do contribute to employment it is not apparent that this is sustainable or long-term employment. This issue may be clarified to some extent with the analysis of YECP participant survey data but presently, the YEC programmes cannot be stated as contributing towards sustainable long-term employment.
2. **Programme effectiveness:** At a programme level, most of the programmes have not been consistently effective. Several of the programmes are victims of a lack of targets – or provision of said targets – and it should be noted that this is concerning as these programmes – given their public status – are likely dependent on budgeting and budgeted items of which the number of youths is almost certainly an aspect. Every effort was made to collect this data and – if it does exist – then the difficulties faced in obtaining the data are part and parcel of the general lack of M&E – which is only as effective as it is available, **and**
3. **Programme focus:** The general developmental philosophy and focus of the programmes needs to be reconsidered. From a strategic vantage point, it is possible to discern the general direction of development and the developmental philosophy. In this regard the programmes share similarities that are indicative of a general sense of YEC ecosystem development.
 - a. **Design:** Most of the programmes are supply side oriented and focused on the enhancement of employment characteristics of youth, this may not be effective as the issue could likely be that there are few new job openings each year – regardless of the level employability of the youth applicants – there simply are not any new jobs.
 - b. **Type:** The type of programme is largely skills development which focuses on employability of the youth and as stated above, is likely not as severe a constrain as the lack of new jobs. In addition, there are two issues here to consider:
 - i. **State of South African education:** The need to provide for improved skills amongst youth must, in part, be an indication of a failing schooling system. There is a need to question why youths – assuming they pass through the schooling system – require further training and skills and to what extent the schooling system should be addressing this. Each year of schooling can be viewed as an opportunity cost on production for the nation and as such, efforts should be made to optimise the period in formal education.
 - ii. **Work done versus work observed:** Many of the programmes are focused on imparting skills to then provide for an improved employability but the extent to which this is actually the case needs to be ascertained. There is a likelihood the skills and systems being implemented and taught at the YEC programme level differ from industry practices as they may not be linked to industry – given that they are not being affected within an industry related business or entity – this raises the question as to the efficacy of any skills programme that is not driven by a private –

industry operating firm – in which market incentives drive the skills development.

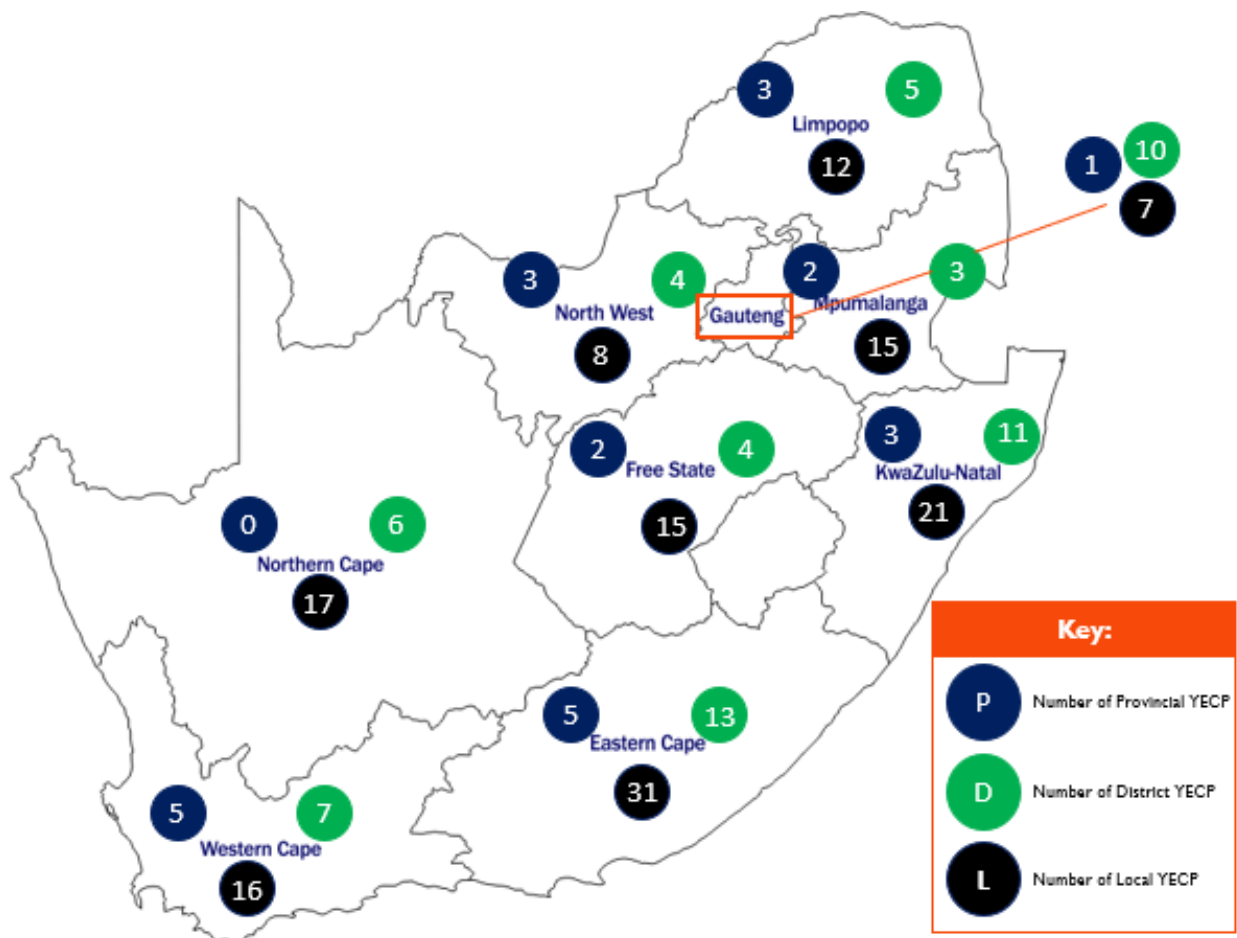
There does appear to be a need within the YEC ecosystem to evolve and change in some of the aspects listed above. It is certain that the focus on the supply side must be counterbalanced with a more formidable push on the demand – in this context this means addressing blockages to employment and the and certainly deregulation and expansion of private business interests.

5.3 Impact

The impact criteria is concerned with:

“... changes, either positive or negative, that are brought about by a development initiative.”

The impact assessment of the evaluation is covered in several different areas not the least of which includes a discussion on the number of youths per programmes as well as the inputs received from the post-YECP survey conducted amongst youths. The assessment of impact effectively begins with the inventory assessment of the evaluation.



There is a wide spread of YECP across South Africa both geographically and according to tier of government, this is conveyed by the figure below.

In addition, there are some salient features that should be observed when considering the YEC inventory in South Africa:

- 1. Nature of local and district YECP:** A notable number of the projects at the district and local levels were internships. Whilst projects and programmes of this nature have been

included in this report's definition of YECP it is necessary to note that many of these are indeed internships. Additionally, it was not possible to ascertain whether they were paid internships or not and therefore, several of this YECP are likely less employment centric than it would appear.

2. **Level of information:** There is certainly a paucity of information available on this project across each level of government. None of the local level programmes were utilised in this assessment as none had enough valid information available to make this possible. The same can be said for the district level programmes. It is a precursor as to the level of Monitoring & Evaluation data and culture within the YECP ecosystem of South Africa that this assessment was not able to gain enough information for an assessment of 15 programmes and had to settle for 11, several of which have estimations and assumptions due to the scarcity of data.
3. **Status of YECP:** The status of these YECP was not discernible from the assessment conducted. This is not something was apparent and, as such, the value of 280 certainly contains defunct or non-active programmes, however, it was difficult to discern if the programme was active, **and**
4. **Source of funding & Prerogative:** The funding provided to programmes and the prerogative of the programmes – particularly at provincial, district, and local levels was difficult to ascertain. For this reason, there may be several programmes that of which have been classed as provincial but are in fact national. Again, the status of M&E and general level of transparency is concerning as these are issues that should be relatively easily to discern.

In addition, the post-YECP participant survey revealed that the net outcome of YECs is more unemployed youth. The proportion of employed youth prior to a YECP was 8%, the level after 12%, this is a 4%-point increase in the number of employed youth. The level of unemployed youth before a YECP was 76%, the level after 88%, this is a 12%-point increase in the number of unemployed youth.

Whilst the net outcome cannot be considered as a definitive indication of the impact of YECP or the YECP ecosystem, it is an indication of the general level of impact.

5.4 Sustainability

The sustainability criteria of the evaluation considered:

“... measuring whether the benefits of a programme are likely to continue after the outside funding has been withdrawn.”

The evaluation of sustainability has not been well assessed in the evaluation in this sense. The limitation on post-programme surveys from the various programmes engaged limited the ability to generate time-series data on participants post the programmes attended. However, the work opportunities and general impact on sectoral level employment are discussed in the broader theme of employment by YECP.

In addition, considerations of the comparison between comparable costings from different sources, are compared to costings within the YECP ecosystem to provide a degree of comparability between these different approaches, and the likely sustainability and impact as a result thereof.

Whilst the YECP do technically generate work opportunities within the broader employment ecosystem, there are several notes that need to be considered in relation to these work opportunities. The table below provides a good overview of this topic.

Programme	Industry/Sector	Work opportunities Created (aggregate 2016-2023)	Total Sectoral Median Annual Jobs ⁵	Prop.
Industrial Parks Youth Jobs Created	Manufacturing	17 880	1 447 443	1,2%
Presidential Youth Initiative	Education	1 085 218	1 383 385	78,4%
Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme	Education	80 444		5,8%
Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme	Education	2 631		0,2%
Tshepo 1 Million	Education	552 464		39,9%
Second Chance programme	Education	996 209		72,0%
National Youth Service	Construction	174 206	826 699	21,1%
First Work Experience Premiers Advancement of Youth (PAY) Programme	Government Services	2 400	988 265	0,2%
Capacity Building Programme	Government Services	6 573		0,7%
Debut Fund	Professional Services	648	2 632 663	0,0%
Artisan Development programme	Secondary sector	1 714 850	1 514 745	113,2 %
Total		4 633 523	8 793 199	52,7%

In addition, it is worth noting the following equation:

$$YEC \text{ Annual work opportunities created} = \frac{4\,633\,523}{8} = 579\,190$$

Based on the above, the following are raised in relation to the contribution of YEC programmes to broader employment goals.

- 1. Employment contribution:** Whilst YEC programmes do contribute to employment it is not apparent that this is sustainable or long-term employment. This issue may be clarified to some extent with the analysis of YECP participant survey data but presently, the YEC programmes cannot be stated as contributing towards sustainable long-term employment.
- 2. Programme effectiveness:** At a programme level, most of the programmes have not been consistently effective. Several of the programmes are victims of a lack of targets – or provision of said targets – and it should be noted that this is concerning as these programmes – given their public status – are likely dependent on budgeting and budgeted items of which the number of youths is almost certainly an aspect. Every effort was made to collect this data and – if it does exist – then the difficulties faced in obtaining the data are part and parcel of the general lack of M&E – which is only as effective as it is available, **and**

⁵ Based on Quantec employment data expecting for education sector which was calculated both with Quantec and data from a 2016 report from the Department of Basic Education (Department of Basic Education , 2016).

- 3. Programme focus:** The general developmental philosophy and focus of the programmes needs to be reconsidered. From a strategic vantage point, it is possible to discern the general direction of development and the developmental philosophy. In this regard the programmes share similarities that are indicative of a general sense of YEC ecosystem development.
- a. **Design:** Most of the programmes are supply side oriented and focused on the enhancement of employment characteristics of youth, this may not be effective as the issue could likely be that there are few new job openings each year – regardless of the level employability of the youth applicants – there simply are not any new jobs.
 - b. **Type:** The type of programme is largely skills development which focuses on employability of the youth and as stated above, is likely not as severe a constrain as the lack of new jobs. In addition, the following issue is considered:
 - i. **State of South African education:** The need to provide for improved skills amongst youth must, in part, be an indication of a failing schooling system. There is a need to question why youths – assuming they pass through the schooling system – require further training and skills and to what extent the schooling system should be addressing this. Each year of schooling can be viewed as an opportunity cost on production for the nation and as such, efforts should be made to optimise the period in formal education.

The YECP, and by proxy ecosystem, were compared to internationally available figures on the cost of creating a single job. To this end the table below provides a comprehensive overview of the issue.

Programme/Research	Spend per Youth	
Industrial Parks Youth Jobs Created	R	2 774 049,22
Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino (2012) ⁶	R	936 846.03
Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme	R	570 125,43
World Bank Assessment	R	562 107.62 ⁷
Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme	R	76 111,33
Wamly website	R	60 000.00
Estimated Efficiency spend to resolve youth issue	R	27 828,24
First Work Experience Premiers Advancement of Youth (PAY) Programme	R	25 000,00
Presidential Youth Initiative	R	23 635,43
Artisan Development Programme	R	21 466,49
Debut Fund	R	20 261,14
Capacity Building Programme	R	4 564,13
National Youth Service	R	1 512,39
Tshepo 1 Million	R	1 125,69
Second Chance programme	R	336,58

⁶ (Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino, 2012) – converted from \$50 000.00 at spot rate on 31/01/24.

⁷ Based on a study that estimated the cost of creating a job was \$30 000.00 – converted to Rands at the spot rate on 31/01/24.

Based on this table it is evident that in so far as the cost of creating a job is concerned from the perspective of other nations the efficiency spend – or cost of creating youth work opportunities is far lower in South Africa.

However, these work opportunities are questionable in terms of their contribution to sustainable and long-term employment and therefore, it is likely that the finding is that the YEC ecosystem in South Africa is underfunded⁸ in so far as their international counterparts are concerned.

Lastly, considerations provided, per workstream, on the cumulative requirement to address youth unemployment through each of the services provided by the different workstreams. These are briefly conveyed by workstream below:

- 1. Knowledge services workstream:** Given this spend, to provide knowledge services programmes services to all the unemployed youth in the most recent period (2023) would require R50 586 547 910⁹. This would require funding 7.4 times greater for a single year than the total funding allocation to knowledge empowerment services for the evaluation period, and 52.5 times more spending than the average annual expenditure of the workstream.
- 2. Skills development workstream:** At this efficiency spend, R214 968 274 760.00 would be required to provide training and skills development to the reported youth unemployed in the 2023 period. This is currently 3.7 times more than has been directed at the training and skills development ecosystem over the evaluation period and 29.7 times higher than the average annual spend on the training and skills development workstream¹⁰.
- 3. Employment services workstream:** The efficiency spend of the work opportunities programmes amounts to R21 061.57 per youth, this would require a total budget of R99 979 272 790.00 to provide work opportunities for the unemployed youth in the 2023 period. This is 1.6 times greater than the total budget allocated to the workstream over the evaluation period and 11 times greater than the annual average budget allocated to the workstream. In other words, the budget would have to be increased by 11 times to meet the current level of youth unemployment in the country as of 2023, **and**
- 4. SMME development workstream:** A total budget of R50.235 billion has been directed at SMME support services workstream over the evaluation period. This equates to an annual average spend of R7 176 433 459.43 and would require a total budget of R417 634 081 910.00 to provide all the unemployed youth in 2023 with the same support services. This is 8.3 times more than has been allocated over the evaluation period and 58.2 times more than is currently allocated on an annual basis. The efficiency spend of the SMME support services amounts to R87 978.53 per youth over the period.

The above resourcing and budgetary considerations having evident implications for the sustainability and likely impact of the YECP ecosystem moving forward.

⁸ Assuming that the international community funds their YECP with the appropriate level of funding to create a single job.

⁹ Calculated by taking the number of unemployed youths in 2023 – 4 747 000 and multiplying by the efficiency spend for knowledge services programmes (R10 565.53).

¹⁰ Annual allocation to training and skills development amounts to R7 233 074 652 an annum (based on R57.864 billion divided by 7 years (2016-2022)).

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations derived from the work above are provided below according to categorical themes.

Institutional arrangement

R1.

The failure of local government to play a more relevant role in youth development is evident. There is a need to resolve issues at the local government level and by so doing, create the environment within which **YECP** can be **locally administered**. It is recommended that South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) be considered in this regard and that an increased proportion of YECP are developed and implemented at the local government level.

YECP Formulation: Demand versus Supply side

R2.

The focus on the supply side of the youth labour market is evident. Given the state of youth unemployment and the length of time for which YECP have been operational in South Africa and the YECP ecosystem has existed, a newer approach must be taken. This approach must be **demand side focused** and must focus on metrics such as number of private jobs created, number of private businesses developed, amount of Foreign Direct Investment secured, and so on. YECP must be **reoriented** from **supply side mechanics to demand side**, if not entirely, then at least partially. An increased incidence of the number of YECP with demand side KPIs as well as increased number of private-public partnerships (PPP). This policy position should be adopted at the national level initially.

YECP Formulation: Development model

R3.

The developmental model of YECP should evolve to a small public purse, a faster rate of workplace evolution, a realisation of the importance of demand side focus and the absolute need to involve industry in a realistic manner that favours industry – i.e., provides the appropriate incentive for industry to want to play a role in the YECP. In effect, YECP should be pushed to engage in more **public-private partnerships** and **align** more with **industry** and the **market**. There should be an increase in the number of YECP that are registered as PPPs.

YECP Formulation: Exit Pathways

R4.

Prioritise the creation of **exit opportunities** for programme participants, as majority of programmes provide skills development and training but do not provide a clear pathway for participants to gain permanent employment going forward. There should be an increase in the number of exit pathways in YECPs as well as the number of youths that acquire jobs through these exist pathways. Potential rebates and incentives for private sector firms that onboard YECP participants can be considered.

Financial resource planning

R5.

YECP are typically underfunded. In the current context of South African public finances, an expansion of funding cannot be made as part of a set of serious recommendations. However, an **aggregation of funding** through the closure of certain YECP and **reallocation** of said funding can certainly be put forward. This can be done on the basis of the level of M&E available from those YECP and thus effective incentives enforced. A reduction in the number of YECP operating at the various levels of national government with a consolidation of funding.

Legislative framework: Policy Environment

R6.

The policy environment in South Africa is relatively convoluted and the documentation tends to span too broad a period. It is recommended that the level of **national policy** making be **reduced, distilled** to the **provinces** and **districts** to a greater degree and that the period over which these documents focus be no more than **five (5) years** and **preferably four (4)** – aligning with the Treasury MTSF periods.

Legislative framework: SMARTness of Objectives within policy

R7.

YECP and policy within the ecosystem must present objectives. In addition, these objectives must exhibit:

- a. Specificity.
- b. Measurability.
- c. Achievability.
- d. Relevant, and
- e. Time-Bound.

Whilst the above are sometimes exhibited in the various YECP and policy documentation there is certainly a need to reiterate the need for this and focus on it. YECP objectives should be specific and measurable when assessed at random.

Partnerships

R8.

Encourage networking between various government departments, as in some cases different departments are running very similar programmes with the same goals/objectives, target groups, and so on. Increased discussions and collaborations could avoid these intersectional programmes. There should be an increased number of joint funded YECP.

Dissemination of knowledge: Online systems and data availability

R9.

Regular updates to information **available online**, as programmes which no longer exist or are no longer being implemented present as though they are still running. New programmes are not easily found, or no adequate information is available. All YECP should have a **strong** and **active online presence**. There should be an increase in the accessibility of YECP online.

Dissemination of knowledge: Programme documentation

R10.

Encourage **programme documentation** (programme aims/mandate/SOP should be created and approved prior to implementation). All YECP should have a clear and available set of strategic documentation outlining the objectives, ToC, and intended outcomes as well as activities and processes to achieve these outcomes. All YECP should have strategic documentation available.

Skills development

R11.

The evident focus on skills development needs to be addressed. It is apparent that this is a large component of the Theory of Change for most YECP. Whilst this research has not assessed the extent to which this skills development has been successful, from a macroeconomic perspective it is evident: Youth unemployment has worsened despite increased provision of skills and funding for skills. Addressing this issue requires an intimate knowledge of the fact that the modern workspace evolves quickly and a skills development programme that is not integrated into a market-oriented entity is not likely to be as effective as one that is. This undermines the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of many of the YECP – if the youth graduating from the skills development programme do not have the skills (or are not as skilled) as others in the market their employability has not improved. A **review** of the focus on **skills development needs** to be **undertaken** and ties into the need to focus on the demand side and not supply side of the youth labour market. A review of the effectiveness of skills development programmes in reducing youth unemployment should be undertaken and issued.

Monitoring and evaluation

R12.

It is certainly apparent that there is insufficient M&E occurring within the YECP ecosystem. This is concerning both in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of these programmes – which is not possible without M&E data – and in terms of the level of transparency and accountability of said programmes. In short, it is **advised** that **disincentives** are put in place for those YECP that **do not keep appropriate** M&E data and incentives for those that do. An increase in the number of YECP that keep appropriate M&E data should be noted.

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ANNEXURE A: PROGRAMME MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE

The below email questionnaire served as the first instrument for data collection from government departments, however, despite numerous follow-ups and individuals contacted the project team received a very low rate of response. The team, in conjunction with the DPME and DWYPD, decided to follow a revised approach and focused on setting up virtual interviews instead to establish contact and gather relevant data.

No.	Question		Response
General Questions			
1.1	Programme name:		
1.2	Programme description/scope/purpose:		
1.3	Programme objectives:	Objective 1	
		Objective 2	
		Objective 3	
		Objective 4	
		Objective 5	
1.4	Please indicate the start date of the Programme:		2000/01/01
1.5	Is the Programme duration linked to the MTSF periods?		
1.6	Has the Programme been active in the following years:	2016	
		2017	
		2018	
		2019	
		2020	
		2021	
		Other	
Questions Concerning Agents			
2.1	Does your Department manage the Programme?		
2.2	If "No" to 2.1, please indicate which organisation/s are responsible for Programme management:		
2.3	Does your Department implement the Programme?		
2.4	If "No" to 2.3, please indicate which organisations are responsible for implementing the Programme:		
Evaluation Questions			
3.1	Has the Programme been evaluated in the last 5 financial years, i.e. any time after 2017/2018?		
3.2	If "Yes" to 3.1, please indicate which period the following	Diagnostic	
		Design/ formative	

No.	Question		Response
	evaluation/s took place, where applicable?	Mid-term	
		Implementation	
		Summative	
		Impact	
3.3	Is this evaluation report available?		
Geographic Questions			
4.1	Is the Programme implemented nationwide and across ALL provinces?		
4.2	If "No" to 4.1, please indicate in which of the following provinces the Programme is implemented:	Eastern Cape	
		Free State	
		Gauteng	
		KwaZulu-Natal	
		Limpopo	
		Mpumalanga	
		North West	
		Northern Cape	
Western Cape			
Data Availability			
5.1	Are data on the budget and expenditure of the Programme available?		
5.2	Are data on the participants of the Programme available?		
5.3	If Yes to 5.2, please complete the following:	Is this database verified?	
		Does the database provide information on the age of participants?	
		Does the database provide information on the race of participants?	
		Does the database provide information on the location of participants?	
		Does the database provide information on the gender of participants?	
5.4	Are data on the staff of the Programme available?		
5.5	Are data on the placement/post-Programme outcomes of the participants available?		

No.	Question		Response
5.6	Please explain how does the Programme collects data with regard to:	Expenditure:	
		Participant data:	
		Project information:	
5.7	Please explain the reporting activities of the Programme:	Does the Programme conduct quarterly reporting exercises?	
		Does the Programme conduct annual reporting exercises?	
		Does the Programme conduct surveys among participants?	
		Does the Programme conduct tracer/ longitudinal studies ?	
5.8	Other forms of monitoring and reporting (please explain):		
Budgetary Questions			
6.1	Does the Programme have ring-fenced funding?		
6.2	Please indicate the amount budgeted for the Programme over the following periods:	Annual budget for 2016	R -
		Annual budget for 2017	R -
		Annual budget for 2018	R -
		Annual budget for 2019	R -
		Annual budget for 2020	R -
		Annual budget for 2021	R -
6.3	Total budget for period:		R -
6.4	Please indicate the expenditure of the Programme in the following years:	Annual expenditure for 2016	R -
		Annual expenditure for 2017	R -
		Annual expenditure for 2018	R -
		Annual expenditure for 2019	R -
		Annual expenditure for 2020	R -
		Annual expenditure for 2021	R -
6.5	Total expenditure:		R -
Selection Criteria			
7.1		Youth	

No.	Question	Response
	Does the Programme apply any of the following criteria in selecting participants?	Persons with Disability
		Women
		Black PDI
		Rural area
		Peri-urban
		Urban
		Poor
		Unemployment status
		Students
		Residents in a specific Province/Region
7.2	Please list any other criteria not listed above:	Criteria 1
		Criteria 2
		Criteria 3
		Criteria 4
		Criteria 5
7.3	Does the Programme have targets in relation to any of the following criteria:	Youth
		Persons with Disability
		Women
		Black PDI
		Rural area
		Peri-urban
		Urban
		Poor
		Unemployment status
		Students
Residents in a specific Province/Region		
7.4	Are there any other targets not mentioned above that the Programme utilises?	Target 1
		Target 2
		Target 3
		Target 4
		Target 5
Participant Questions		
8.1	How many participants have partaken in the Programme over the following years:	Number of participants 2016
		Number of participants 2017

No.	Question		Response
		Number of participants 2018	
		Number of participants 2019	
		Number of participants 2020	
		Number of participants 2021	
8.2	Does the Programme allow participation over more than 1 year?		
Programme Aspect Questions			
9.1	Are any of the following aspects part of the Programme's activities/offerings?	Labour market information	
		Counselling & guidance	
		Job search skills	
		Job placement	
		Adult literacy programmes	
		Adult vocational training (off-the-job)	
		Adult vocational training (on-the-job)	
		Accredited training (QCTO/SAQA certification)	
		Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	
		Financial incentives for training	
		Wage subsidies offered to employers	
		Public works (or community-based programmes)	
		Enterprise development (starting SMMEs)	
		Entrepreneurship development (what it takes to be an entrepreneur)	
		Providing work experience	
Grants for transport, childcare and other allowances			
Soft skills (Teamwork, communication, time management)			

No.	Question		Response
		Other	
Comment Section			
Contact Information			
10.1	Please indicate the name of the contact person for this Programme:		
10.2	Please indicate the email address for the contact cited above:		
10.3	Please indicate the mobile number for the contact cited above:		
<p>Please do not forget to SAVE your file. Please email the final (completed) saved version to Urban-Econ Development Economists.</p>			

ANNEXURE B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND SAMPLE REACHED

The below table represents the efforts made by the project team to illicit responses for key informant interviews and programme information.

Summary of efforts to engage

Departments contacted	Individuals contacted	Emails		Phone calls	
		Sent	Response rate	Calls made	Response rate
24	125	223	12.5%	205	7%

The interviews took the form of interactive discussions and followed a semi-structured approach in which a set of predetermined questions (based on the master research instrument in Annexure D) – tailored to the experience, knowledge, and area of interest of the stakeholder – was used to guide the discussion.

The key informants interviewed were individuals believed to have knowledge of various YECP, therefore sampling took the form of judgement sampling. A total of 12 interviews with 16 key informants were undertaken for this study (most interviews were with individuals, however in some instances more than one person from a public body participated in an interview). The following parties were interviewed for the purposes of this evaluation.

Summary of engagement held

Data source	Designation
Department of Basic Education	1. Director: Second Chance Matric Programme 2. Deputy Director General 3. Project manager: PYEI implemented in DBE (BEEI)
Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	4. Chief Director
The Presidency	5. Programme Lead: Presidential Employment Stimulus 6. Director: Presidential Youth Employment Intervention
Department of Higher Education and Training	7. Director: Career Development Services 8. Director: VET Curriculum
Department of Sports, Art and Culture	9. Director: Youth Enrichment
Western Cape Government	10. Head: Youth and After School Programme Office 11. Director: People Empowerment
Department of Public Works and Infrastructure	12. Chief Director: EPWP Infrastructure Sector 13. Programme Manager: Artisan Development Programme
National Youth Development Agency	14. Chief Executive Officer 15. Director: Strategic Management

ANNEXURE C: PARTICIPANT SURVEY AND SAMPLE REACHED

The following questionnaire was deployed to participants of YECP, in January 2024 once complete YECP participant databases were received.

Name of Fieldworker:											
Project name											
Village/ town						Municipality					
Survey sector											
Date:	D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Survey Number:		

Urban-Econ Development Economists, on behalf of the Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (DPME), is conducting independent research to assess the efficiency of youth participation in Youth Employment Creation programmes (YEC programmes). You have been randomly selected for this questionnaire. We would like to have 10 minutes of your time to get your input for this project. Your responses will be kept **completely confidential**, and answers will be aggregated. The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. **Please make sure to receive your data package post completion.**

Screening Questions		
Are you younger than 35?	Yes	No
Did you participate in a Youth Employment Creation programme (e.g., Presidential Youth Initiative) while you were a youth (younger than 35)?	Yes	No
Please name the YEC programme/(s) that you are/(were) a part of:		

If “No” then thank them for their time and move on to next participant

1. Demographic & Household Profile					
1.1 Name		1.2 Surname		1.3 Phone number	
1.4 Age		1.5 Gender			
1.6 Race:					
1.7 Are you currently employed?	Yes		No		

1.8 Are you the sole income earner in your household?		Yes			No				
1.9 Do you have a Disability ?	(1) No	(2) Vision	(3) Hearing	(4) Speech	(5) Learning / Mental	(6) Physical			
	(7) Other:								
1.10 Do you live in an urban/rural area?		Urban	Rural	1.11 Have you previously been involved in more than one YEC programme? If yes, how many		Yes	No		
1.12 In which province are/(were) you involved in a YEC Programme?	Eastern Cape	Gauteng	Free State	KwaZulu Natal	Limpopo	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	North West	Western Cape

2. Participant Skills Development							
2.1 What is your highest level of education ?		(1) No Schooling	(2) Some Primary (Grade 1 – Grade 6)	(3) Complete Primary (Grade 7)	(4) Some Secondary (Grade 8 – Grade 11)	(5) Grade 12 / Matric	(6) Higher
		(7) Other:					
2.2 Did you need to have skills / work experience to be employed by this programme?					Yes		No
2.2.1 If “Yes”, which skills / work experience were required for this project?							
2.3 Which of the provided answers best describes the activity you were involved in during the YEC programme (select one):			Knowledge empowerment – teaching, counselling & job search	On the job training	Teaching, lecturing & other education	Employment – provided with a job	

		assistan ce				
2.4 Did you receive training on this project?			Yes		No	
2.4.1 If "Yes", was this training completed through a SETA registered organisation?			Yes	No	Unsur e	
2.4.2 Did you receive a certificate on completion of your training?			Yes		No	
2.4.3 Rate the training that you have received. Where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good.		(1) Very poor	(2) Poor	(3) Neithe r poor nor good	(4) Good	(5) Very Good
2.4.4 What is the total duration of training provided?		(1) 1 day or less	(2) Less than a month	(3) Less than 6 months	(4) More than 6 months	
2.4.5 What was the main type of training that was given?		Technical training e.g. bricklaying, computer skills or Life skills e.g. Literacy and numeracy, AET				
2.4.6 Has the training helped you in working in your current job/life?	Yes		No			

3. Impact of Employment on Household and Surrounding Community						
3.1 How long have you been / (were you) involved/employed on the YEC programme?	(1) <1 week	(2) 1 week-1 month	(3) 1 month -3 months	(4) 3 months – 1 year	(5) 1 year +	
3.2 What was the daily rate (Rands per day) you were paid for your time in YECP?						
3.3 What is the daily cost of transport to the YEC programme site?	(1) None	(2) Less than R 10	(3) R 10 – R 20		(4) R 21+	
3.4 What is the average distance from your home to the YEC programme site?	(1) Less than 1km		(2) 1 – 10 km		(3) Greater than 10 km	

4. Employment Profile and Employability Post Project						
4.1 Before the YEC programme, when had you last worked?	(1) More than 5 years	(2) 3-5 years	(3) 1-3 years	(4) 6 months - 1 year	(5) Less than 6 months	(6) Never
4.2 What was your employment status before the YEC programme?	(1) Discouraged work seeker	(2) Unemployed & actively looking	(3) New to job market / Previously studying	(4) Enrolled in another YECP project	(5) Employed by another employer	
	(6) Other:					
4.3 What is/was your main motivation for taking part in the YEC programme (max one)	(1) Skills improvement/training opportunity	(2) Work experience	(3) Earn an income	(4) Start own business		
	(5) Other:					
4.4 Do you believe the experience gained in the YEC programme helped you start or run your own business(es)?	Yes			No		
4.5 If "Yes", how long did it take you to find employment?	1-3 years	6 months – 1 year	Less than 6 months	I have not found employment		

5. YECP & Project Perception Profile							
5.1 Before being enrolled in the YECP programme did you know about the opportunities with youth employment programmes within government?						Yes	No
5.2 How did you find out about the YEC programme?	(1) Implementing agent/contractor	(2) Municipality/government department	(3) Media e.g. newspaper, internet	(4) Friends/family	(5) Community based organization	(6) Chief / head man	
	(7) Other:						

5.3 How would you rate your experience with the YEC programme? Where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good.	(1) Very poor experience	(2) Poor experience	(3) Neither good nor bad	(4) Good experience	(5) Very good experience
5.4 Rate your experience in applying to be part of the YEC programme (the process of application and your experience of it). Where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good.	(1) Very poor experience	(2) Poor experience	(3) Neither good nor bad	(4) Good experience	(5) Very good experience
5.5 What challenges have you experienced with the YEC programme you have been working on?					
5.6 What are your future plans for your career after the YECP programme is/was completed?	(1) Find another YECP project	(2) Find public sector employment	(3) Find private sector employment	(4) Start your own business	(5) Unsure
	(6) Other:				

6. Miscellaneous
Would you like to add any additional information about your time working with YECP programme?
Do you have any additional questions or comments with regards to this survey?

The sample of YECP participants provided numbered 4 316 individuals. From this, 393 unique responses were logged. The initial target value for responses was 353 to obtain a confidence level of 95% in relation to the sample size of 4 316, this target was achieved and, as such, the obtained responses were deemed sufficiently representative of the broader sample of youths in YECP. The survey sample targeted and reached is presented in the table below.

Survey sample reached

Data source	Targeted sample size	Sample reached
4 316 YECP participants	353 survey responses	393 unique and significant survey responses

ANNEXURE D: MASTER RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Research question	Evaluation aspect	Evaluation question	Data sources				
			Secondary	Primary			
			Programme documents	Programme owner	Programme manager	Implementing agent	Participants
Are these government youth employment creation programmes aligned in relation to the overarching legislative frameworks/plans?	Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which of the years of the analysis was the programme active? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the government's overarching legislative frameworks and plans in relation to youth employment creation during the analysed period? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the government objectives in relation to youth employment creation during the analysed period? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the programme's objectives as per the design? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the programme's objectives align with the broader objectives related to youth employment creation? What aspects of the objective does the programme aim to contribute? 					
Are the existing government programmes designed and adequately resourced to contribute towards reducing youth unemployment?	Programme design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the programme owners, manager and implementing agent? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the programme's target groups? What are the selection criteria applied, especially in relation to the youth? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the programme have a ToC? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the Master ToC, how can the programme's ToC be illustrated? What inputs, activities, and outputs of the Master ToC encompass, and what does it exclude? 					

Research question	Evaluation aspect	Evaluation question	Data sources				
			Secondary	Primary			
			Programme documents	Programme owner	Programme manager	Implementing agent	Participants
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any programme elements that do not form part of the Master ToC? What are they, and how do they fit with the other elements? What do they mean to achieve/contribute towards? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the existing elements of the programme sufficient to contribute towards the legislative objectives? What are the implications of this? Are there any missing elements that undermine the success of the programme? 					
	Programme efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What financial and non-financial resources are involved in the implementation of the programme? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are these resources sufficient to achieve its intended objectives (as per design and not what it should have)? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the major gaps in the resourcing of the programme that influence its ability to achieve the intended objectives? 					
	Is the suite of government programmes contributing to the broader country's objectives of creating employment for the country's youth	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which geographic areas does the programme span? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the targeted outputs of the programme, as outlined in the recreated ToC? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What activities have the programme included during the analysed period to deliver on these targets, as outlined in the recreated ToC? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the programme's activities' results during the analysed period? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the outputs met the targets set for the programme? 							

Research question	Evaluation aspect	Evaluation question	Data sources				
			Secondary	Primary			
			Programme documents	Programme owner	Programme manager	Implementing agent	Participants
(sustainable job creation)?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What contributed to the successful delivery of the targeted outputs? What worked well? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the key impediments to the programme concerning the achievement of the targets and other outputs? What did not work well or was missing? 					
	Impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which outcomes have the programme pursued, as per the recreated ToC? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well did the programme achieve each of these outcomes? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What contribution did these outcomes make to creating sustainable jobs for the youth? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What contributed to the programme's success in contributing to the broader country's objectives of creating employment for the country's youth? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What impeded the programme in contributing to the broader country's objectives of creating employment for the country's youth? 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How sustainable are the programme's outcomes? Are there exist strategies in place? 							
How can the government's youth employment creation programmes be strengthened and upscaled to	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What aspects of the programme need to be strengthened and improved? 					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the programme be scaled up? How and in which areas? 					

Research question	Evaluation aspect	Evaluation question	Data sources						
			Secondary	Primary					
			Programme documents	Programme owner	Programme manager	Implementing agent	Participants		
enhance more inclusive economic growth in the country?									

ANNEXURE E: CALCULATIONS

Proportion of construction industry that is youth

Year	Youths	Adults	Total	Proportion Youth
2008	613 000	568 000	1 181 000	52%
2009	608 000	613 000	1 221 000	50%
2010	549 000	556 000	1 105 000	50%
2011	535 000	558 000	1 093 000	49%
2012	457 000	585 000	1 042 000	44%
2013	468 000	616 000	1 084 000	43%
2014	586 000	613 000	1 199 000	49%
2015	571 000	751 000	1 322 000	43%
Median	560 000	599 000	1 143 000	49%

Source: Based on UE calculations derived from (Statistics South Africa , 2015).

Proportion of jobs that are youth

Year	Youths employed	Total Jobs	Proportion
2016	6 174 190	15 968 404	39%
2017	6 175 318	16 365 789	38%
2018	6 125 066	16 609 577	37%
2019	5 957 532	16 570 766	36%
2020	5 227 902	15 253 436	34%
2021	4 897 664	14 883 568	33%
2022	5 421 906	15 735 864	34%
Median	5 957 532	16 365 789	36%

ANNEXURE F: RATING SYSTEM – PROGRAMME-LEVEL EVALUATIONS

Relevance Assessment

Policy focus	Principal	Tier 1	Tier 2
<p>Listing the extent to which a programme is aligned to specific policy. Is depicted as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strong: Indicating direct association with a piece of policy. Requires a specific policy line item or directive that the programme is addressing (e.g., PYEI directive from Goal 14 of MTSF). Moderate: Indicating a degree of association with a policy item but not a directive or explicit association. Weak: Indicating little association with policy or directive however, tenuous connections can be made based on contextual indications. 	<p>Policy items that the programme is directly aligned with as stated in either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An official document from the programme. An official statement or speech by an appropriate representative of the programme. 	<p>Policy items that the programme is considerably aligned with based on an assessment of the programme in relation to the objectives of policy items or other contextually relevant information.</p>	<p>Policy items that the programme is weakly aligned with and are potentially achieved as a result of broad policy objectives and a general alignment of the programmes outcomes with these policy objectives.</p>

Design Assessment

Design type	Justification
<p>Whether the programme is one or more of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Skills development. Employment. Knowledge services. SMME development. 	<p>Provides a narrative overview of the reason for the listing to the left.</p>
Design nature	Justification
<p>Whether the programme is directed at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demand side: (of youth labour market) focused on increasing youth employment by stimulating demand for youth employment – this includes public employment but will be adjusted with the disclaimer of “Limited” given that most public employment of this nature is not sustainable. Supply side: (of youth labour market) whether programme is focused on youth employment by addressing the employability of youth and their inherent characteristics in terms of this 	<p>Provides a narrative overview of the reason for the listing to the left.</p>

employability.
Narrative
Provides a breakdown of the various dynamics uncovered in the above assessment.

Effectiveness Assessment

Metric	Score	Narrative
Summative effectiveness	The total targeted youths of the programme divided by the total achieved youth outcomes provided as a proportion.	Justification for information and listings to the left.
Programmatic effectiveness	Outcome of the number of years a programme has equalled or exceeded programme targets. A point is awarded for each year in which the achieved outcomes exceed the targets and the total points awarded as compared to the count of years for which data is made available.	
Comparative effectiveness	A comparison of the objective effectiveness between the different programmes according to the outcomes of the objective effectiveness assessment.	

Efficiency Assessment

Total Spend	Number of youths	Spend per youth	Efficiency ranking
Total funds spent by the programme	Total number of youths that have taken part in the programme	The spend per youth	The efficiency spend of the programme when compared to other programmes.

ANNEXURE G: YECP IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Programme type	Sub-Programme	Identified Features
Employment Services	Labour market information	1. Provision of information on the labour market. 2. Information compilation. 3. Information dissemination.
	Counselling & Guidance	4. Advice provided to youth.
	Job Search Skills	5. Training on interviewing and interview preparation soft skills.
	Job Placement	6. Matching of youth to job opportunities.
Skills Development	Adult literacy	7. Provision of basic literacy & numeracy skills.
	Adult vocational training (off-job)	8. Varying length. 9. Classroom-based. 10. Not enrolled in formal education. 11. Skills for occupational tasks.
	Adult vocational training (on-job)	12. On-the-job training. 13. Apprenticeship programmes. 14. Formal apprenticeship. 15. Non-formal apprenticeship.
	Second chance (Equivalency)	16. Target early drop-out (school). 17. Target young offenders.
	Financial incentives for training	18. The financial benefit to training service providers. 19. Vouchers to participants to attend training.
Employment Creation	Wage subsidies	20. Tax relief for employers. 21. Monetary grants to employers. 22. Voucher for young people.
	Public work (Community-based)	23. Temporary jobs. 24. Direct income. 25. Delivery of infrastructure.
	Self-employment	26. Advice on opening a business. 27. Training on starting a business. 28. Non-refundable grants. 29. Loans. 30. Specialised services (e.g., marketing/export assistance)
	Entrepreneurship development	31. Target school leavers. 32. Training on entrepreneurship.
Integrated	-	Combine all the above and below.
Other types of programmes	Work experience	33. Paid work experience. 34. Unpaid work experience.
	Grants for transport, childcare and other allowances	35. Cash for transportation, childcare and other. 36. Reimbursement/voucher for transport, childcare, and other.
	Other monetary & non-monetary entitlements	37. Assistance with specific barriers in finding work (access to phone, clothing etc.).

ANNEXURE H: BEST PRACTICE SCAN/BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

Table 6. 1: Good practices outcomes

Country	Practice
Denmark	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional arrangement: The DUF is composed of organisations that are for people under the age of 30. In addition, these organisations are from scouts to political organisations, youth organisations, environmental organisations, organisations for youth with disabilities and so on. In total, there are approximately eighty (80 organisations under the Danish Youth Council umbrella. These organisations are jointly run by a budget and board that are appointed every two years at a delegation which is attended by all members. This being a sharp deviation from the national level or international level focus of the other nations. 2. Financial arrangement: The DUF receives a portion of the Danish Lottery Fund and uses this money to advance it's mission. Again, in contrast to being nationally financed or receiving monies from international organisations or foreign countries. 3. Social context: The DUF is focused most notably on democracy and the preservation of democratic values. To this end, the main mission statement of DUF is "DUF's core values are participation, dialogue, volunteerism and influence. We promote communities where people are committed towards one another, and we actively engage young people in democracy, society and organizations; locally, nationally and internationally." (Danish Youth Council , 2023). The organisation was originally born out of the extremism and radicalisation of Europe in the 1930's, culminating with the occupation of Demark by the German forces in the 1940's; and 4. M&E Framework: Given the nature of the DUF, there is no strict M&E framework. However, the following were noted as areas that the DUF have reported on or seem to observe: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of youth engaged: Whether as members, volunteers or otherwise. b. Number of hours volunteered a month: A record of the number of hours volunteered by youth across the country. c. Allocation of funds: Record keeping on where the funds administered by DUF are distributed to and the amounts that are distributed. d. Youth voter participation: The level of voter participation from the youth, this evidently driven by the DUFs main mission; and e. Number of projects: The number of different project administered by members of the DUF across Denmark and other countries globally.
Kenya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevance of interventions to target beneficiaries: Developing buy-in from key stakeholders by having their interests served through the programme. 2. Potential of technology introduced: The technology applied, taught or introduced should be one that will have significantly positive impacts on the community and hold the greatest potential in terms of opportunity costs, and 3. Use of broad-based participatory approaches in project design and implementation: Having a broad input from stakeholders will improve the appropriateness of end programme.
Peru	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional arrangement: The PROJoven was implemented by a Coordinating Unit within the Labour Ministry and was granted "financial and administrative autonomy". The various functions of the unit included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Register of ECAPS (training centres). b. Planning and technical evaluation. c. Supervision. d. Targeting. e. Communications. f. Legal advice. g. Administration; and h. Statistics and informatics. 2. Financial arrangement: The programme was financed in part by the Peruvian government (US \$8 000 000.00) and in part by the Inter-American Development Bank (US \$18 000 000.00). The total funding allocated to the

Country	Practice
	<p>programme is equivalent to US \$41 994 886.18 in 2023 values (R 752 338 385.91 as o 31 July 2023). This is similar to the Kenyan experience in so far as the Dou-Nou programme is concerned.</p> <p>3. Social context: The main focus of the PROJoven programme was “to help provide economically disadvantaged youths between the ages of 16 and 24 with access to the formal labour market. This is to be accomplished by means of specific activities designed to provide vocational training and work experience, in conjunction with labour intermediation, orientation and information services, which will meet the business sector’s and labour market’s requirements. The program is also intended to foster competition and efficiency in the training services market by promoting greater interaction between training providers and firms in the private sector. The program’s specific objectives are to help raise the labour participation rate, job quality, and wage levels of young people in the target group.” (Office of Evaluation & Oversight , 2006). The focus here is specifically on integrating youth into the private, formal, labour market through training. A secondary focus is the development of training market of the country.</p> <p>4. M&E Framework: The M&E framework of PROJoven was strongly implemented from the outset of the programme and including focusing on metrics such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employment. b. Paid employment. c. Formal-sector employment. d. Hours worked per week. e. Hourly wages; and f. Monthly earnings. <p>In addition to the above metrics measured, the M&E framework was designed to accommodate the following evaluation questions from the outset:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> g. “To provide estimates of program impacts in a consistent format for all the previous cohorts of program beneficiaries on several outcomes of interest such as labour market insertion, earnings and occupational segregation. We will explore the heterogeneity of impacts for relevant sub-groups and over time.” h. “To conduct an exploratory analysis on the issue of selection bias. Given the availability of panel and repeated cross-sectional data, we will implement a longitudinal variant of matching to address the potential problem of selection on time invariant unobserved characteristics.” i. “To provide a Cost-Benefit analysis.” j. “To conduct a first analysis of PROJoven’s impacts on the Vocational Training Market.”; and k. “To provide lessons learned from the PROJoven experience.”

These above practices were taken and used in contrast with South Africa to provide the basis for recommendations.



Figure 6. 1: GDP growth rate & Youth unemployment rate (Developed by Urban-Econ based on World Bank, 2023)

The above comparison between the annual GDP growth rate and youth unemployment is complex, yet it does reveal that:

1. Even though South African GDP growth rates have typically been positive, the South African youth unemployment rate has shown a persistent upward trend, and
2. There is no direct correlation between the annual GDP growth rate and the youth unemployment rate in South Africa or for any of the other nations.

The comparative analysis can engage in more meaningful analysis with the above context in mind considering the apparent relationship between the youth unemployment rate and the annual GDP growth rate.

It would be misleading to state that the lack of features, or fewer YECP ecosystem features, implies higher youth employment - this would be to commit the correlation implies causation fallacy. However, in the context of YECPs, it is not unjustified to deduce that the country with the most developed and advanced YECP system of the four (4) countries analysed displays significantly higher youth unemployment. This allows for two observations:

1. **YECPs are in many instances ineffective or improperly affected in South Africa:** If South Africa has the most advanced YECP ecosystem of the four countries and has been persistently engaged in direct and indirect actions to address youth unemployment, as appears to have been the case, then by and large these actions have not yielded the results desired. This implies that either YECPs, in their current form, in South Africa are ineffective, generally and broadly speaking, or that they are improperly applied and/or
2. **Larger macroeconomic cycles dominate the youth issue in South Africa:** If the YECPs in South Africa have indeed been effective in addressing youth unemployment, then the problem of youth unemployment is driven by, more extensive, more general macroeconomic trends in the economy. This is certainly the case to some extent in South Africa, with severe profound structural issues brought about due to state

planning during the Apartheid regime. However, as Figure 3-9 reflects, South Africa has experienced multiple years of economic growth and is now in its 29th year of democracy. Three (3) decades of a new government and monetary policy is sufficient time for measures to play a role in the broader society.

Both of the above is likely to play a role in South Africa. In seeking some resolution regarding YECPs in South Africa, the benchmarking analysis has arrived at several comparative outcomes that will be discussed. The following observations are made:

- 1. More liberal labour market policies:** The use of more liberal market approaches, such as has been done in Denmark and was attempted in Peru, to create a more desirable hiring environment for businesses and firms could aid in reducing youth unemployment by lessening the administrative burden on businesses and providing favourable conditions for these businesses to absorb unemployed youth.
- 2. Military/Service personnel:** The use of military or service conscription as a means to initiate youth employment could be an effective way to develop skills, habits, and other positive outcomes for youth in South Africa.
- 3. Basic experimental YECP:** Using less advanced and more basic technological YECP, such as the Do-Nou project¹¹ in various regions of the country, could yield better results for a lower capital input.
- 4. Lower administrative levels:** Driving YECP developments, initiatives, and budget to lower levels of government and administration, a devolution of national central planning could potentially aid a reduction in the level of youth unemployment given the effectiveness of lower levels of government in other countries. This would require addressing local government issues in South Africa initially.
- 5. Broader macroeconomic issues:** Addressing more general macroeconomic problems in the economy may further the issue of tackling youth unemployment. A few examples from the benchmarked countries are provided below in this context, **and**
- 6. Direct interventions versus indirect “interventions”:** A When addressing youth unemployment there may be a need to change the approach from supply-side, direct interventions, such as YEC programmes. To demand side indirect interventions, in the South African context this would require various labour market issues, enabling environment problems, and infrastructural shortfalls.

The above points are expanded further below within the context of the findings presented in section 5:

- 1. Labour market:** A discussion on the liberality of the labour market is likely beyond the scope of this work – however, it is worth considering that most of the YEC programmes considered, and by assumption the broader ecosystem, are supply side dominant and therefore focused on fostering attractive employment. This is problematic if the conditions for said employment are not favourable. If the conditions of the labour market are such that there is not demand for youth, then fostering attractive employment characteristics amongst youth will not achieve the end goal of improving employment – it will merely result in better qualified unemployed youths. As such, a serious consideration as to the provisions of the labour market and extent to which “willingness to hire” among private firms is driven should be considered.

¹¹ A road building project in Kenya that focused on the use of sandbag road building techniques, called “Do-Nou” in Japanese.

2. **National youth service:** South Africa has had a history of compulsory public service which has been utilised in various forms to achieve different ends. There is certainly room to consider the integration of said public service back into the border youth ecosystem so long as this integrated has SMART objectives which are well established. Such an endeavour could be used to rebuild ailing infrastructure, upskill youth, and redevelop the standing of the nation among various components of society – which appears to have become increasingly fractured¹².
3. **Nature of YEC:** The YEC programmes are all predominantly directed at the supply side of the youth unemployment problem. Whilst this is necessary and plausible to some extent, there is something to be said for a lack of focus and direction as to the demand side of the youth unemployment problem. This fissure in the YEC ecosystem is likely contributing to compounding youth unemployment issues that will not be resolved. In addition, addressing demand side issues requires an entirely different developmental mentality and approach from government – perhaps this could begin from within the YEC ecosystem?
4. **Implementation level:** The number of YEC at local government levels is evident from the inventory collated as part of this research. However, the quality of these YEC is questionable and they cannot be said to be good or robust based on various omissions or lack of information on their part. The failure of local government in South Africa is established as a matter of public record¹³. This fracture appears to have an upward effect in placing the onus of addressing youth unemployment level on ever higher levels of government. This is an issue that should be addressed – through a strengthening of institutions by increasing the role of private enterprise in current government domains, **and**
5. **Macroeconomic considerations:** The general economic conditions in South Africa do not lend themselves to an increase youth employment. Youth are typically at a disadvantage in the modern knowledge economy – where skill and networking – play a major role in the success at the workplace and the benefits of youth are no longer as relevant as they were/are in labour dominant industries. This is worth considering – the cohorts of uneducated youth are unlikely to be swept up by the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) as they do not have a skillset predisposed to this. On the contrary, they are likely to be disadvantaged by it due to the fact that 4IR will likely make typical labour jobs (which favour youthful and robust labour) more accessible to older – more experienced – labour. Thus, the only solution is to provide as sound a set of operating conditions as is possible and access to resources – such as public libraries etc – such that the youth can empower themselves to operate within the market. The rate of advancement RE technology across all industries does not bode well to rigid skills development courses either and should be considered.

A final analysis on the comparison of South African YEC and other countries is derived through a consideration of the efficiency spend of the South African YEC against foreign counterparts.

Table 6. 2: Efficiency spend comparison: South Africa versus

¹² The fracturing of South African society is exemplified by the Gini coefficient in the economic context whilst becoming increasingly evident through various societal events such as the Durban-July riots of 2021, the various township based xenophobic events that have arisen and been documented in various pieces of literature (Francis & Webster, 2019) and (Magubane, 2015).

¹³ Reference: (Auditor General, 2020/21).

Programme/Research	Efficiency spend ¹⁴
Industrial Parks Youth Jobs Created	R 2 774 049,22
Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino (2012) ¹⁵	R 936 846,03
Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme	R 570 125,43
World Bank Assessment	R 562 107,62 ¹⁶
Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme	R 76 111,33
Wamly website	R 60 000,00
Estimated Efficiency spend to resolve youth issue	R 27 828,24
First Work Experience Premiers Advancement of Youth (PAY) Programme	R 25 000,00
Presidential Youth Initiative (BEEI)	R 23 635,43
Artisan Development Programme	R 21 466,49
Debut Fund	R 20 261,14
Capacity Building Programme	R 4 564,13
National Youth Service	R 1 512,39
Tshepo 1 Million	R 1 125,69
Second Chance programme	R 336,58

From the above it is clear that at the international level the cost of creating a job is far in excess of what the majority of YEC programmes in South Africa are currently spending. This further corroborates the questions around the sustainability and temporal nature of the various work opportunities created by the different YEC programmes in place. All three sources provided from an external stand point indicate that the cost of creating a job is at least R60 000.00 – this does not take into account the cost of then paying for that same job. Regardless, the act of creating employment is expensive – made increasingly so through various employment regulations and provisions which heightened the barrier to employment and often disincentivise the hiring of labour.

Whilst the cost of creating a job and the expenditure per youth are not directly comparable, they are within the same logical framework: They are both directed at employment. Comparing statistics on these two provides reference points of a comparative nature and an indication of the required spending versus the actual spending.

Regardless, South Africa's YEC ecosystem is typically underfunded compared to both the required domestic rate to meet youth unemployment as well as compared to international counterparts.

¹⁴ Average spend per youth on a programme basis across various YEC as well as the cost of creating a job across different sources.

¹⁵ (Mohamed, Marouani, & Robalino, 2012) – converted from \$50 000.00 at spot rate on 31/01/24.

¹⁶ Based on a study that estimated the cost of creating a job was \$30 000.00 – converted to Rands at the spot rate on 31/01/24.



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