

## **Empowering Youth Development for a Sustainable Economy**

Being young is synonymous with boundless energy and a hunger for innovation. Known as the connected generation, South Africa's youth are tech-savvy and able to adopt new digital trends with ease. Their digital literacy and fluency enable them to navigate new digital landscapes effectively, like that of automated and digitized technologies that are designed to be flexible, scalable and responsive to ever changing needs and demands.

The youth unemployment rate in South Africa is at a staggering 46,5%, which is one of the highest in the world. There are several reasons for the youth unemployment and the main ones are lack of skills and education among the young people and lack of job opportunities in the country.

To address youth unemployment, there is a need for a collaborative and comprehensive approach that includes entrepreneurship, skills development and job creation. In pursuit of this objective, Ciyandza Consultancy Services collaborated with Lubanzi ICT Consulting to design and develop B-BBEE 'Digitized' – an automated digital B-BBEE management software solution that streamlines B-BBEE management to ease the verification process. This innovative cloud-based B-BBEE Software System allows measured entities to do real-time updates, gap analysis, and progress reports, enabling them to track and improve their B-BBEE status level.

The team comprised of young talent with highly specialised skills in robotics, coding, quality assurance, software engineers, and a Business Analyst. This team was in the forefront of the software development and are further doing enhancements on the software.

The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act has also played a crucial role in transforming South Africa. It has brought about various plans and initiatives aimed at addressing historical imbalances, promoting economic inclusivity, and creating opportunities for previously disadvantaged individuals. One significant aspect of the BBBEE Act is its emphasis on skills development, recognizing that equipping the youth with the necessary skills can contribute towards economic development.

As we commemorate Youth Day, it is vital to recognize the untapped potential of young South Africans and their capacity to drive economic growth.

By believing in the power of the youth and inspiring them to believe in themselves as well as fostering skills development, mentorship, entrepreneurship and equity programmes, we can empower young individuals to take charge of their future and contribute to a sustainable and inclusive South Africa.

Let us continue to support and nurture the next generation of leaders as they navigate the landscapes of the digital era.

*Alua Continua*

**Our youth, our future**