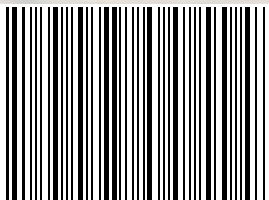


IMPACT

THAT'S IT

Building sustainable futures
through impactful learning.

WHERE WE ARE ALL ABOUT THE YOUTH!



20251108

skills **panda**
Impact, that's it!

#2

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Education

Provide continuous, on-demand training to upskill youth

Inclusion

Foster equal opportunities for marginalised youth.



Technology

Champion tech adoption among township and rural youth.



Employment

Democratise employment by matching skills with opportunities.



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Our Accreditations



Skills Panda Impact in Numbers



**726
Youth
Empowered**

Enrolled across YES internships, learnerships, skills programs, and Alumni Entrepreneurship.



STRONGEST AGE GROUP

43%

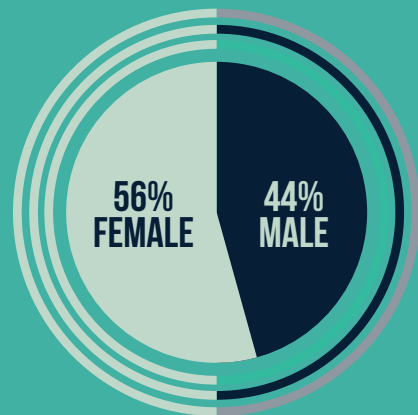
Majority of participants are aged 25–30, seeking upskilling and artisan training.



UNEMPLOYED BEFORE JOINING

86%

Skills Panda creates first-time employment pathways for most participants.



Gender Balance

56% female vs 44% male participation across all programs.



■ 89% African youth
■ 9% Coloured
■ 2% Indian



POVERTY FOCUSED REACH

57% of youth came from households earning R0–R1000 per month.



SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

37% of participants live in single-parent homes, showing the program's reach into vulnerable groups.



371 Youth with Disabilities Supported

Equal 50/50 gender split, with 84% African People with disabilities representation.



Skills Panda Impact in Numbers

Retention & Completion

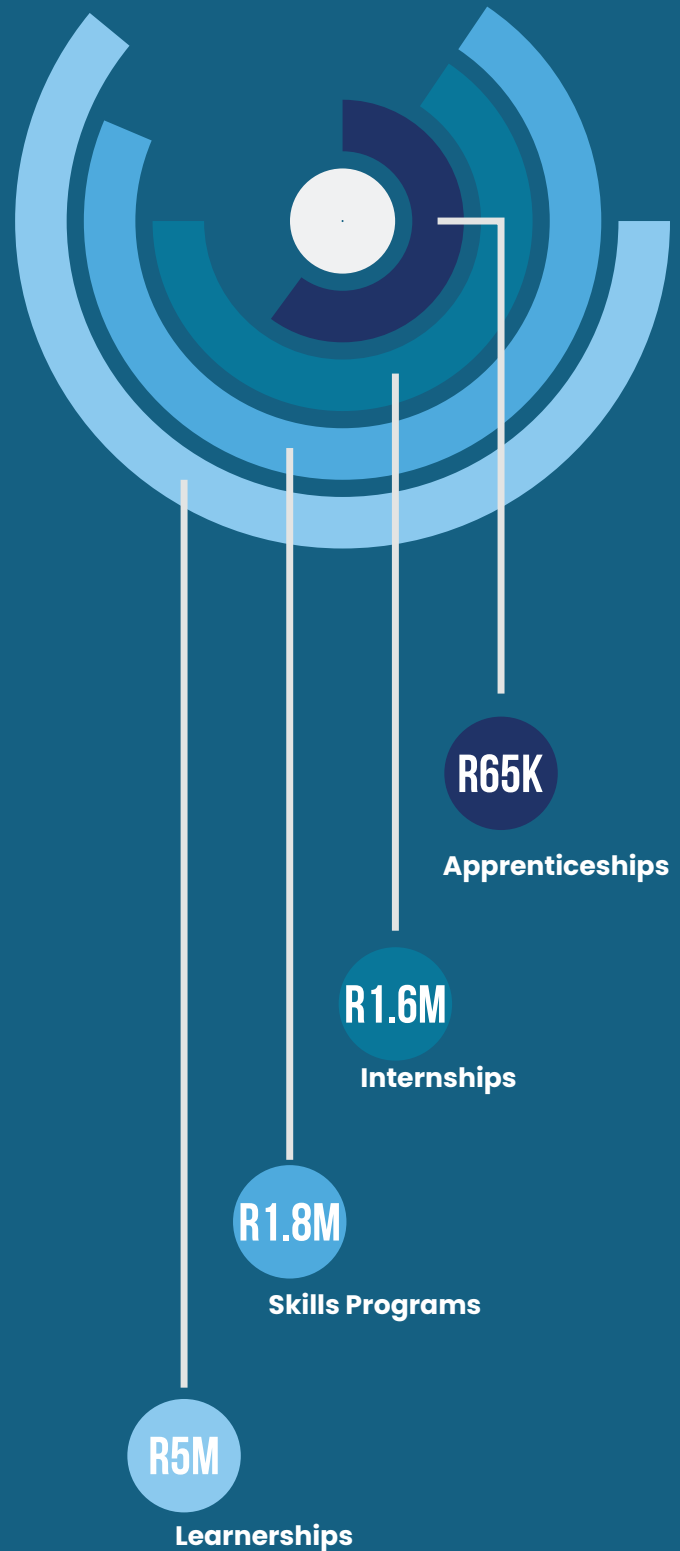


Employment Outcomes -Post Programs

One in every three youth have secured employment through self-employment, Further Education and Training and traditional employment

Life-Changing Impact – Participants report stipends helped them become household breadwinners, invest in businesses, and fund driver's licenses breaking cycles of unemployment.

R8.7 Million
in Stipends Invested



Who Is Skills Panda?

Skills Panda is an established black-owned youth development agency that was founded by the youth, for the youth. We help skill and place the country's top talent at various companies within South Africa. This is achieved with the use of technology which enables learning, inclusion and employment among the youth of South Africa.

We are a digital community driven by passion and opportunity specifically curated for South African youth. With the aid of our digital app PandaBot, we can recruit the youth of South Africa based on their highest level of education as well as what specific skills they require based on interest, then place them in programs tailored according to their interests as well as highest level of education.



What do we do?

Our solutions and approach are focused on creating employment by offering township and rural based youth access to



Objectives of the Skills Panda Program

The objectives of our programs are to empower our South African youth with in-demand skills which enhances their chances of employability and creating opportunities for economic advancement. We achieve this through technology-driven learning solutions, practical skills training and bridging the gap between education and employment.

We foster a sense of purpose and contribute to the economic development of local communities by empowering youth to become successful professionals as well as entrepreneurs by combining the efficient use of technology with personal touch of traditional learning methods which aims to create a comprehensive and effective learning experience.



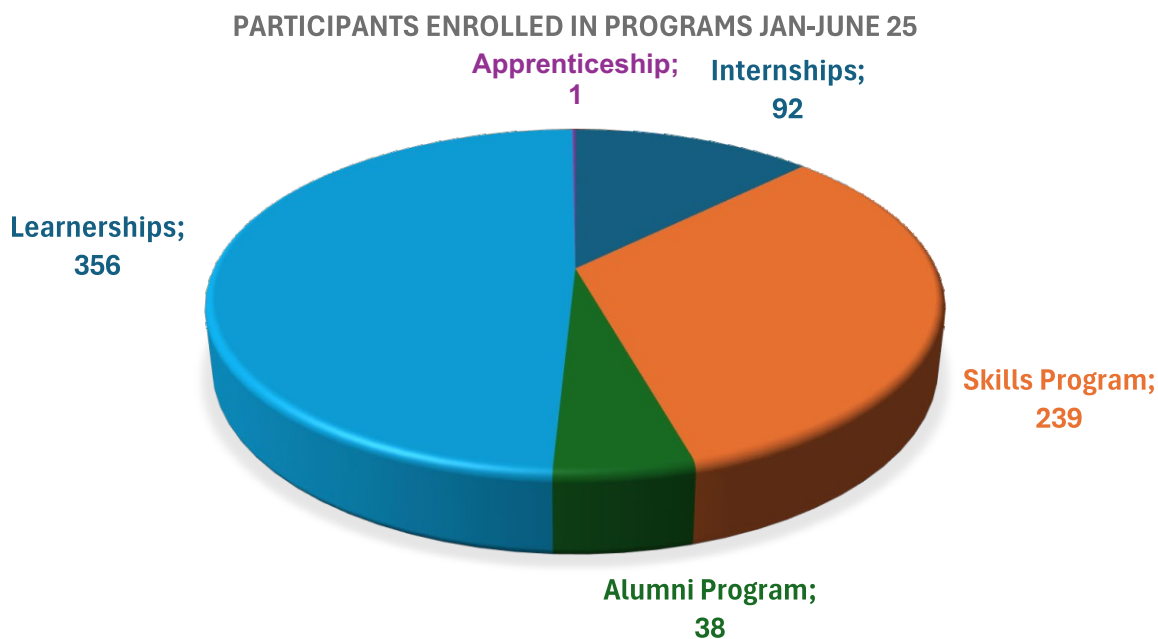
Our core objectives can be summarised as follows:

Skills Development • Youth empowerment • Job creation • Inclusion and access
Future ready skills • Community impact • Accredited training • Blended learning
approach

Programs Implemented at Skills Panda

Skills Panda collaborates with various sectors and partners within South Africa because we pride ourselves in ensuring that participants are placed within their sectors of interest but also sectors where we noticed there is high demand for the program or course based on the research in the job market or industry.

To date, we have enrolled 726 participants in skills development programs, learnerships, Y.E.S internships, our very own Alumni Entrepreneurial program as well as an apprenticeship.



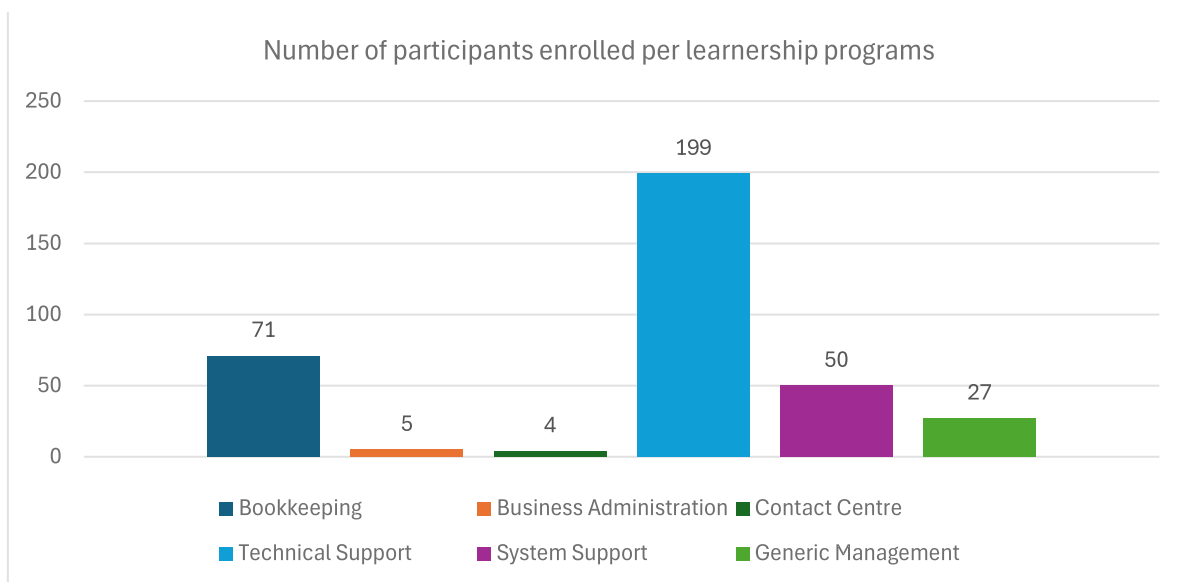
Majority of these participants have already exited the program, as the programs which commenced mid-year are already completed. We were able to retain most of our participants in this program however some exited the program due to having found other employment opportunities, or other underlying factors.



Learnerships

Our learnership programs are applicable and available for youth (ages 18–35) who have completed their secondary education, tertiary education or learning at any other training institution. Employers, companies and organizations provide the required work experience for a particular duration (as a learnership encompasses both theoretical skills which they acquire in the physical in-person training and the practical skills which participants acquire from employers) to assist participants gain the relevant skills in the field of work. All learnerships implemented at Skills Panda are registered and accredited where participants competence is measured based on their workplace and learning attendance.

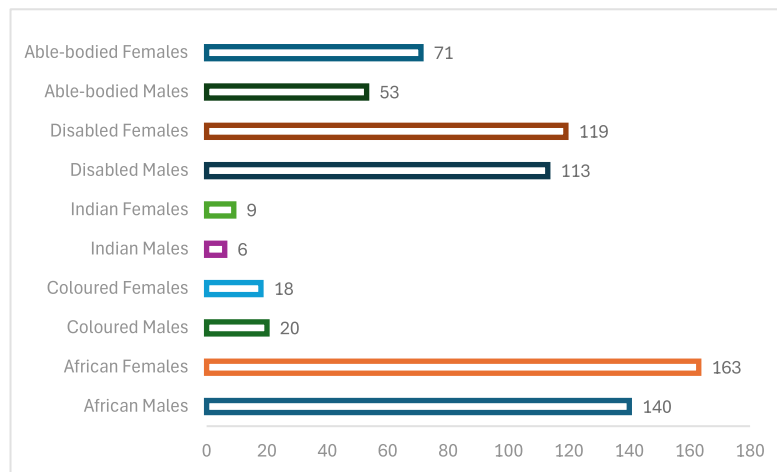
During the learnership program, participants are given a monthly stipend for a duration of 12-months. To date, we were able to enrol **356** youth into our learnership programs. Upon completion of the learnership, participants are given an accredited NQF certificate, workplace experience to continue pursuing employment opportunities in that field of work post completion of the programs.



[Picture 1] Depiction of various programs which participants were placed in

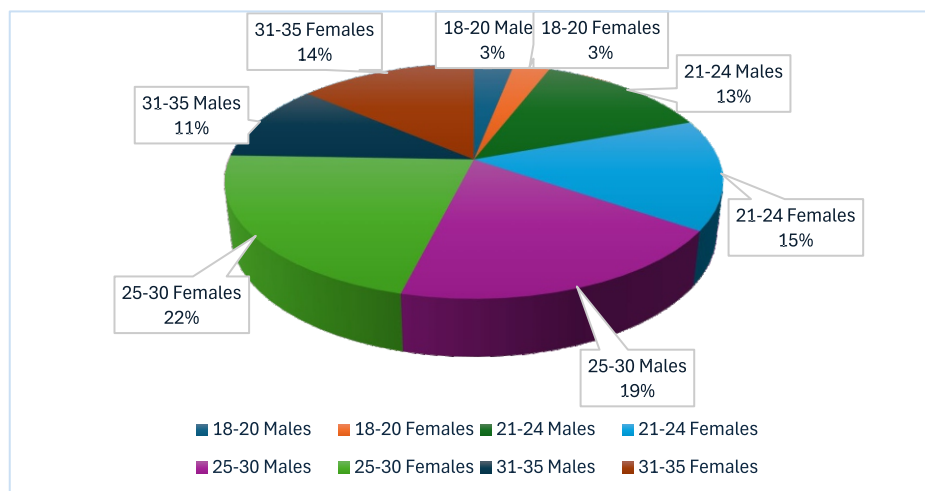
Able-bodied and disabled youth were enrolled and completed our learnership programs. Programs which commenced mid year will be ending this year, whereas some programs will still be continuing till next year.

Learnerships



[Picture 2] Learnership participants according to race and gender

The above graph depicts the various ethnic groups categorized according to genders in our learnership programs. The illustration depicts three ethnic groups which were a part of our learnerships namely African, Indian & Coloured. We also had participants who were living with disabilities who were accommodated in our programs, and we were successful in retaining a high rate of youth living with disabilities.



In our learnership program, there were various age groups which took part of the program, here is more detailed information regarding the illustration.

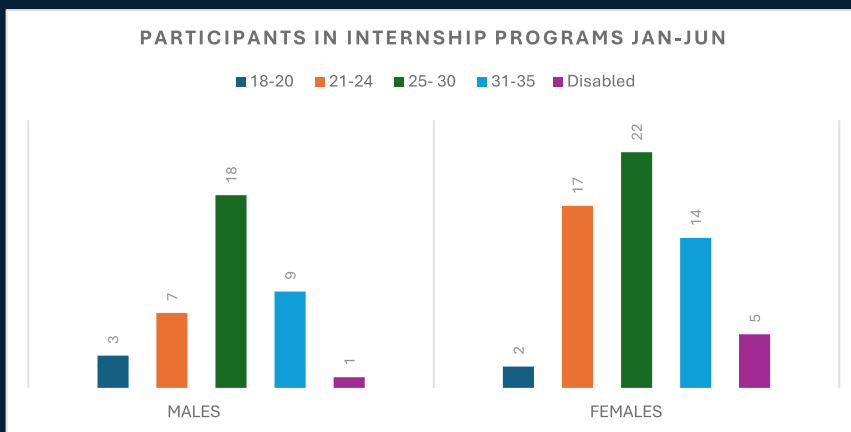
- 11 male participants were in the age cohort 18–20 & 10 female participants were in the age cohort 18–20
- 48 male participants were in the age cohort 21–24 & 54 female participants were in the age cohort 21–24
- 69 male participants were in the age cohort 25–30 & 77 females were in the age cohort 25–30
- 38 male participants were in the age cohort 31–35 & 49 females were in the age cohort 31–35

Youth Employment Services (Y.E.S) Internship Programs

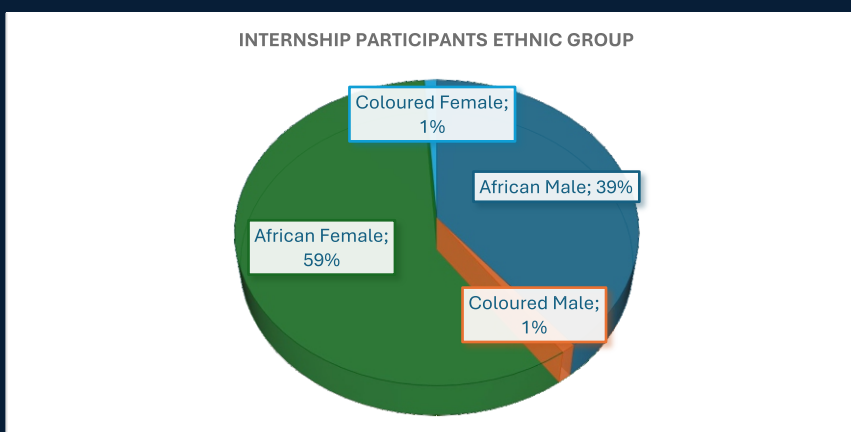
The Youth Employment Services programs are paid internships awarded to companies to implement in their organizations, offering unemployed graduates of color the chance to real, practical workplace experience which they acquire based on the qualification they possess. At Skills Panda, our Y.E.S programs are aimed at creating work opportunities for the youth aged 18–35. These work opportunities increase their chances of employability but also allowing the participants to earn an income whilst gaining valuable work experience. Our Y.E.S Internship programs are aimed at ensuring that

- Our unemployed black youth gain practical work experience, ensuring that the skills they acquire in the workplace will make them more “attractive” to their future employers.
- Majority of our participants who got enrolled into our Y.E.S programs were able to secure permanent employment after completing the program.
- Our program opens room for them to build connections with their supervisors in the host organization/company that they have been placed in.

From the month of January to date, we were able to successfully absorb approximately 92 unemployed youth under our Y.E.S internship program.



[Picture4] Participants categorized according to gender and age



[Picture 5] Ethnic groups which enrolled in our Y.E.S internship program

We had high volumes of attendance (**98%**) from black participants aged 25–30. The internship program has been **successful in retaining all 92 participants** from the commencement on the program to date.

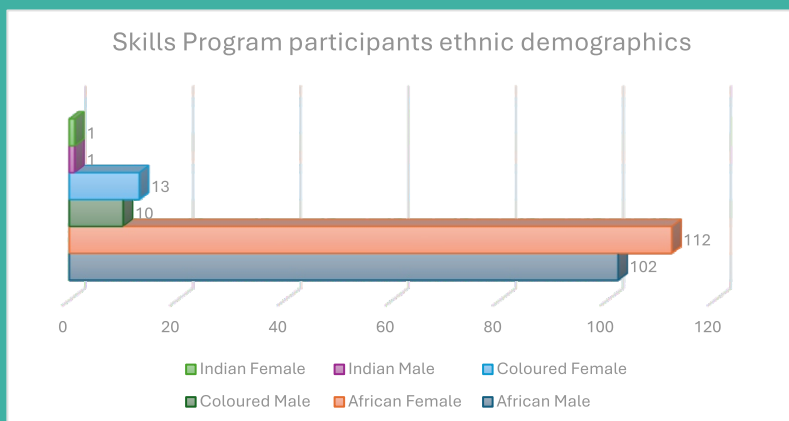
Skills Programs

As a black-owned youth organization which was founded by young youth for black youth, we selected targeting the needs of the unemployed youth in South Africa. We provide tailor-made skills programs which address the specific needs of the youth such as entrepreneurship training, financial literacy training, customer service programs as well as technical support training.

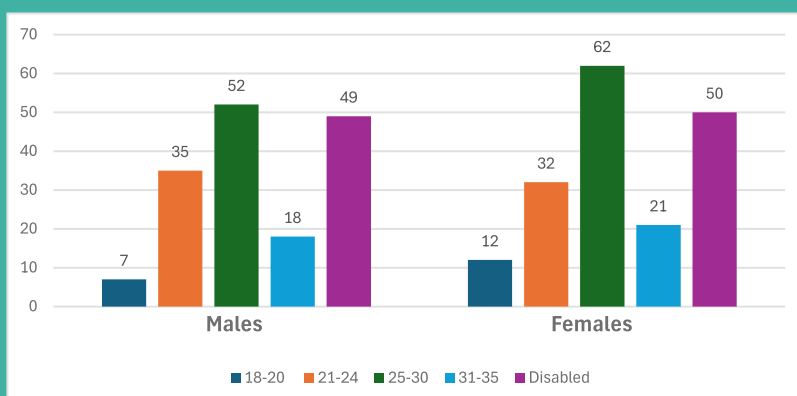
At Skills Panda, our skills development programs take a duration of three to five months to be complete. During the program, the participants are equipped with employment opportunities competencies that meet the current job market demands, we do this to ensure that our young people are provided with training which prepares them as job seekers for available positions. Beyond employment, our program fosters for personal growth and development ensuring that our learners gain self-confidence and a sense of purpose in themselves. By doing this, we can monitor and ensure that our learners personal development contribute to their involvement in the country's economy, community involvement as well as gain the confidence to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

To date, as Skills we have managed to currently enrol 239 participants into the following programs

Financial Skills program • Customer Service programs • System Support programs • Microsoft AWS & Azure programs • Digital Marketing program



[Picture 6] Number of participants (238) enrolled into skills programs sorted according to their ethnic groups



[Picture 7] Number of participants according to their age cohort

91% of the participants were African whereas **9%** of the participants were Colored, there was a high absorption rate of Africans as opposed to Colored (**2%**). During the programs, we had a high number of attendances from the ages **25-30** compared to age cohort **18-24**.

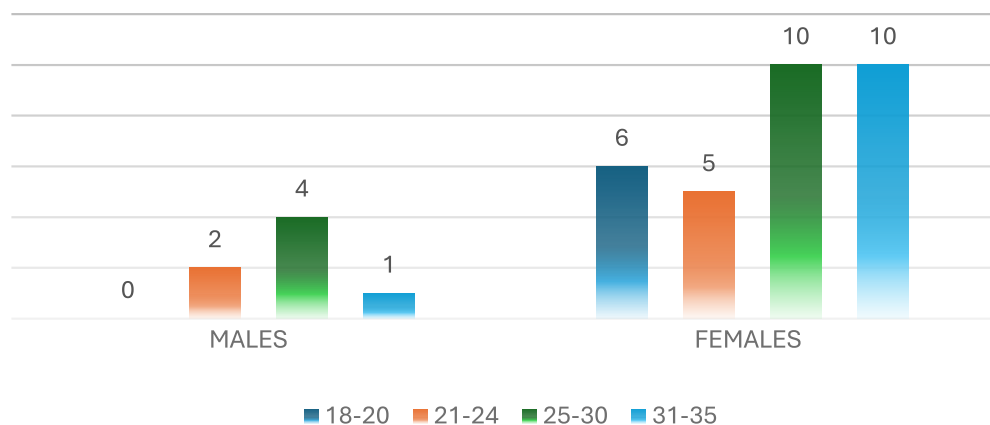
Alumni Entrepreneurial Program

Skills Panda was excited to launch its very own Alumni Program in June 2025. The program would have encompassed all Skills Panda Alumni's who were absorbed from previous programs. The program started off with vibrant, young, energetic youth of 55 participants enrolled into the program and ended off with 38 participants active in the program.

The program took a duration of eight weeks training as it was our own official pilot program. The Alumni Program is aimed at equipping young people of various races of color with foundational business skills. The program was intensive in-person training in which participants attended and during the sessions were exposed to entrepreneurial thinking, financial literacy and practical tools which will empower our young people to envision and build their own sustainable income-generating ventures.

Upon completion of the program participants would have received a business start-up kit in which they will make use of to kick-start their journey. The kit will help our young entrepreneurs to register their businesses, have an established starting point for their business.

ALUMNI PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AGE COHORT



All participants who participated in the Alumni skills program were 100% African males and females from the ages of 18-35. Participants who participated in the program were both able-bodied and living with a disability.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships are an effective way to gain hands-on skills and experience in a trade or profession. Some industries require that you complete them, and many companies use apprenticeship programs to train new employees and prepare them for a career. The host organizations that we place participants in are responsible for equipping and developing their apprenticeship programs and they often do this by collaborating with industry associations, councils or other organizations within the similar sector.

Our apprenticeship programs provide hands-on job training experience, by pairing our apprentice with an experienced mentor to assist with guiding them how to complete tasks, demonstrate workplace processes while providing education on the tools and resources which they will need in the job. Our apprenticeship trainings are conducted with professional workplace environment

One African participant was successfully enrolled into a Trade Boiler-Maker apprenticeship program in which the individual will be completing the following year.

Skills Panda Baking Program



Skills Panda launched a baking program for 16 young, vibrant unemployed youth in which they were a part of. The program commenced beginning of July and was a continued success. The youth who took part of the program were youth from the ages of 18-25, and who came from not earning an income to now generating their own source of income which in turn, in the future will enable them to employ more unemployed youth and skill them. A survey was conducted with the participants who completed the program in which responses received were generated from the participants regarding their experience of the program.

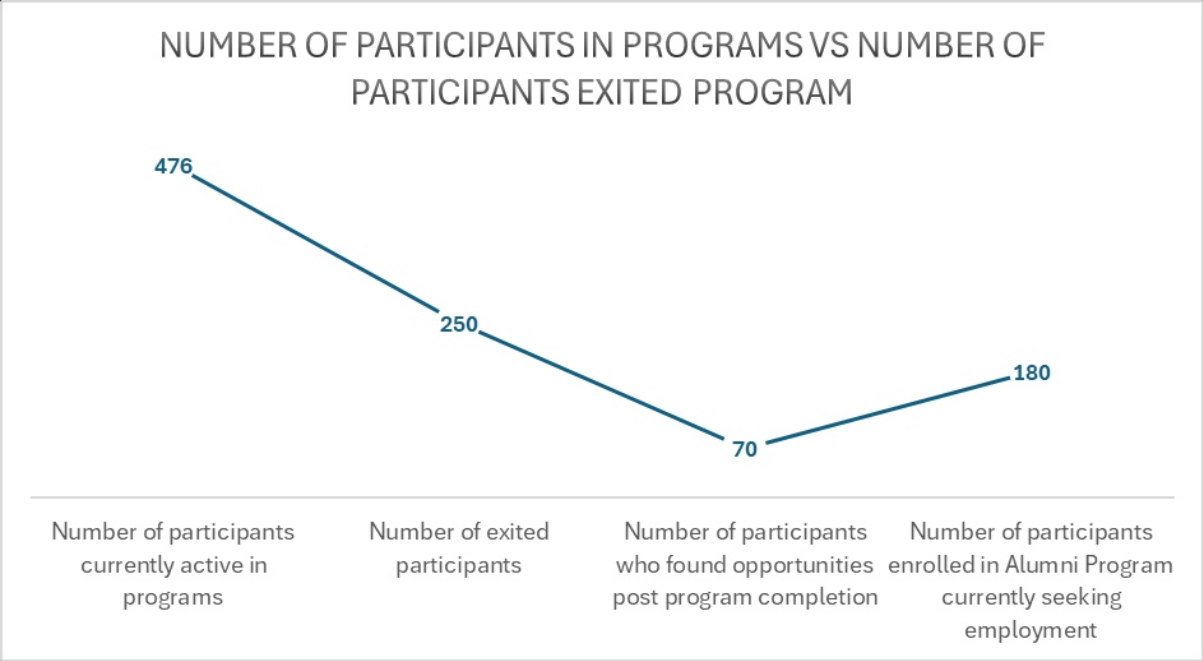
The program proved to be beneficial to the participants as they stated that they are now able to apply the skills and knowledge that they had acquired during the training in their lives to either enhance their businesses (as two participants had their own businesses already) or gain a new set of skills and experience which now enables them to earn an income.

Majority of the participants were unemployed before starting the program and now after completing it, they are now entrepreneurs running their own businesses in their respective communities. With most of the participants only having completed matric and have been struggling to find employment opportunities as those opportunities require some means of experience, the baking program financially assisted the participants and enabled them to be employers instead of employees who in future will employ other young individuals with skills and experience.

Number of programs implemented vs Number of participants exited and employed

Upon commencement of the programs implemented in Skills Panda, we had an intake of 726 young people, some living with disabilities, and some able-bodied. 34% of youth have exited the program upon completion while 64% of youth are still active within our programs.

A survey has been conducted to measure our programs’ impact on the participants as well as their overall experience of the program particularly for those who have exited the program.



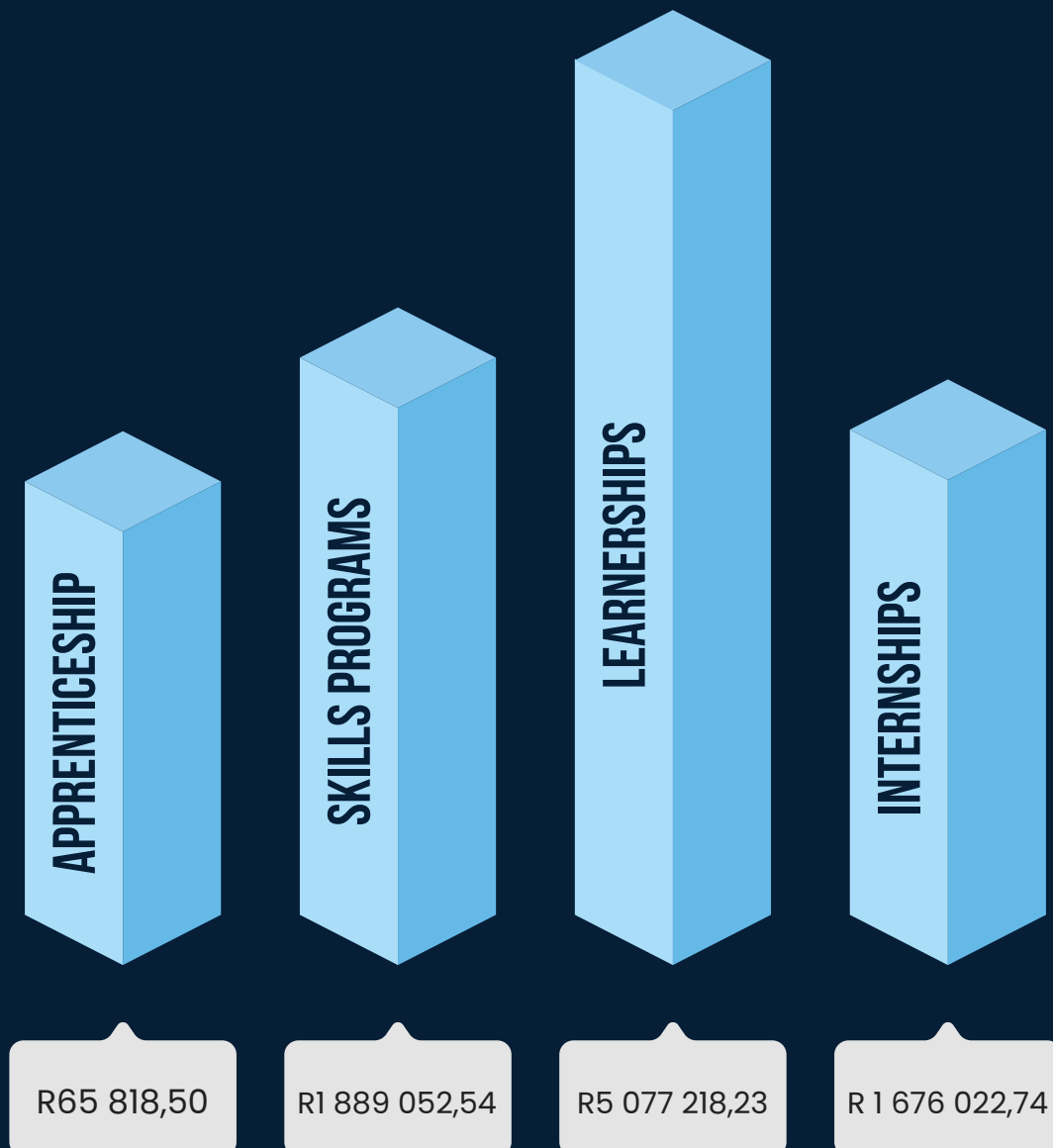
While 22% of our participants who exited the program are in our Alumni program currently seeking employment, some of our youths were able to secure opportunities post completion of the program through absorption, self-employment, furthering their tertiary education at recognized institutions. Skills Panda continues to provide support to our Alumni through the aid of our PandaBot opportunities which are made available through the app. Skills Panda is currently maintaining mentorship for the participants post completion of the programs because we aim to ensure that our participants remain equipped with work readiness and entrepreneurial skills.

Impact of Current Value of Stipends Paid

All our participants enrolled in learnerships, internships or skills programs received a monthly stipend to reduce travelling, meals and personal costs during the training period. Inclusive in the training package is 22.5GB of data that enabled participants to attend virtual classes and do online work readiness training provided by Skills Panda.

As much as the stipend is designed to assist the participant with everyday costs during the training period, majority of our youth uses a portion of that money towards contributing financially at home as most homes are led by single parents or youth headed households.

Skills Panda has contributed towards the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in stipends which sustain participants during implementation/training.

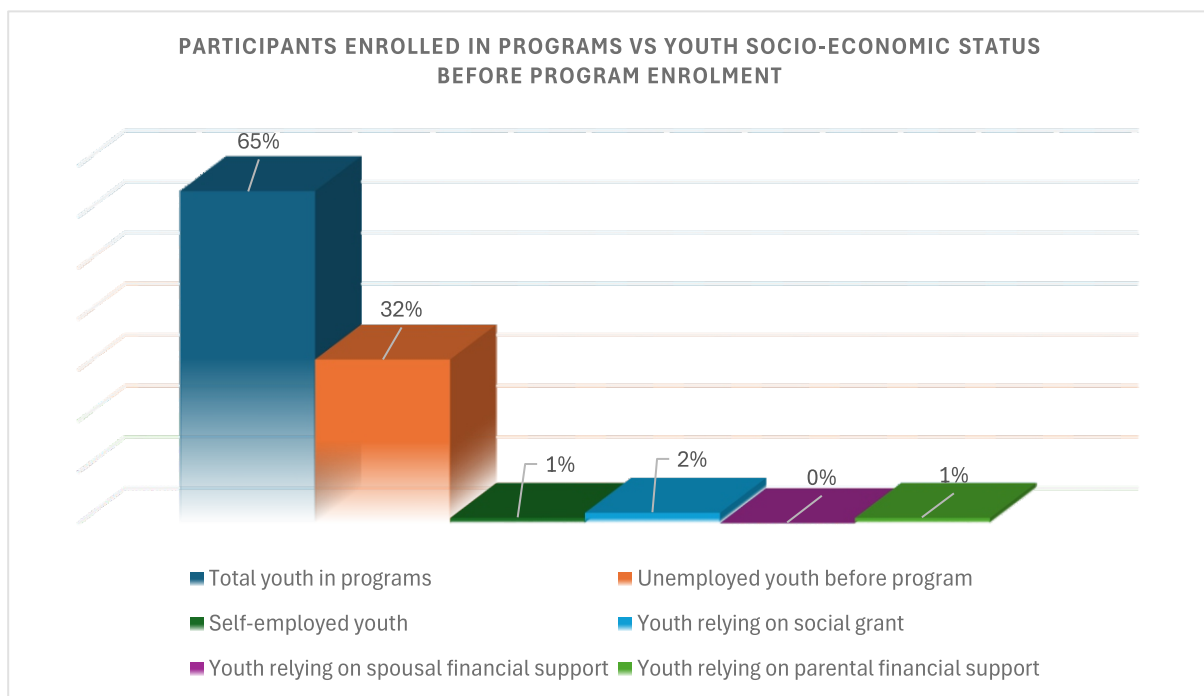


How have our programs contributed to the South African GDP?

Our programs play a vital role in the country's economy as they provide a means of income to the unemployed youth as well as equip young people with relevant skills and experiences which are currently in demand in a specific sector. We have contributed towards the GDP in the following ways:

Tackling high growing unemployment rate in South Africa amongst youth through Skills Development

Skills Panda programs aim to combat the high levels of unemployment in South Africa, as programs such as learnerships and internships offer an immediate solution in providing unemployed youth access to meaningful training and workplace experience. Majority of our programs are work-based learning programs which provide essential skills that help people move directly into jobs, which in turn reduces unemployment and increases the employability of the participants.

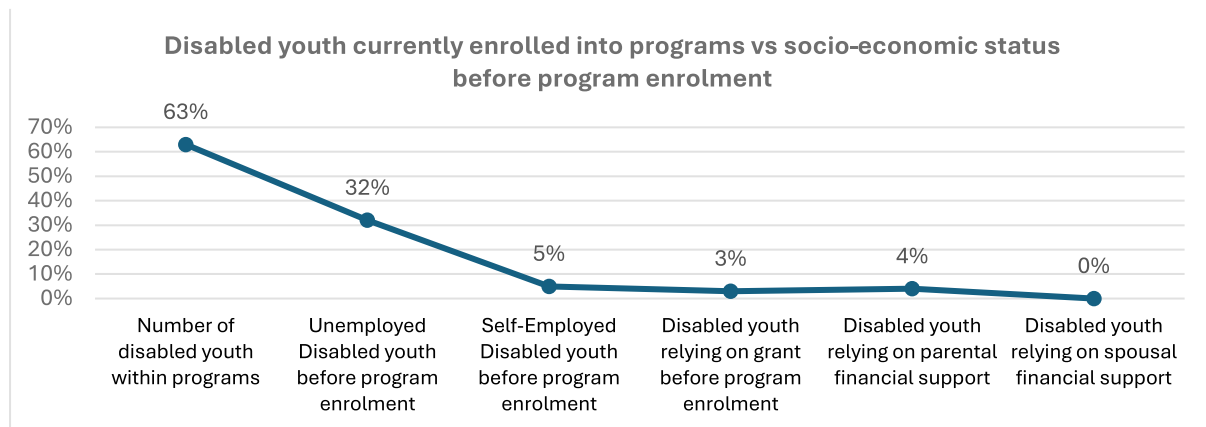


Addressing the shortages of skills in high-demand, sought-out sectors

Some industries such as Information Technology, Customer Service and System Support often face a challenge whereby they currently have a shortage of qualified, and skilled candidates in the sector and as we speak, these industries are the most sought-after and in demand currently in South Africa. Our programs provide our participants with much needed skills and qualifications, which ensure that they are equipped with knowledge and experience in that sector, upon completion they can venture out and enhance their professional career.

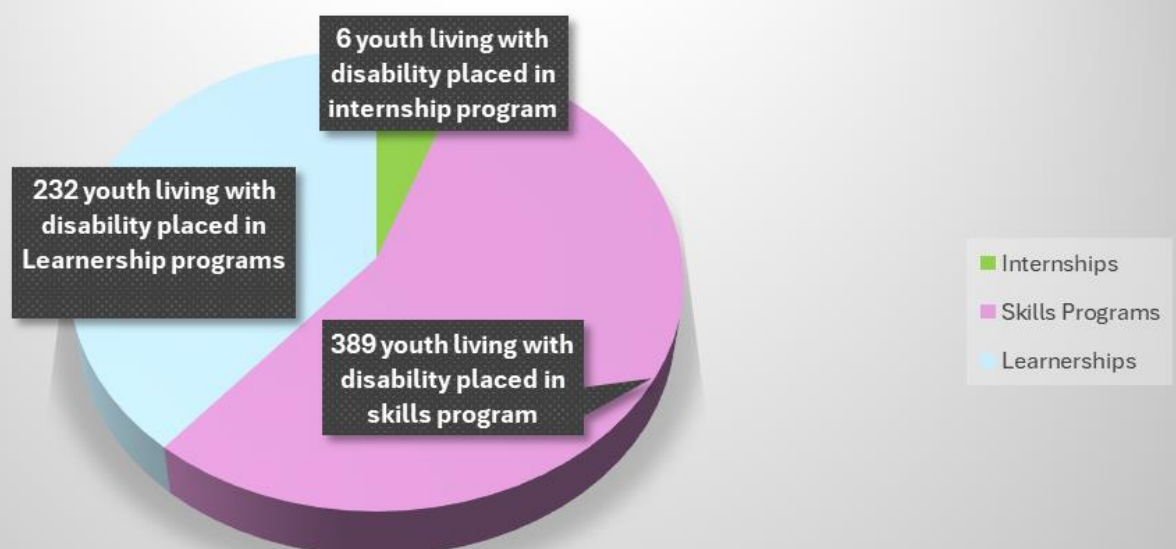
Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity

As we all know, unemployment is on the rise, and it is even worse for the population currently living with disabilities. Our programs have been seen as a powerful tool when it comes to promoting diversity and inclusion to these marginalized groups (people living with disabilities) and youth that come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

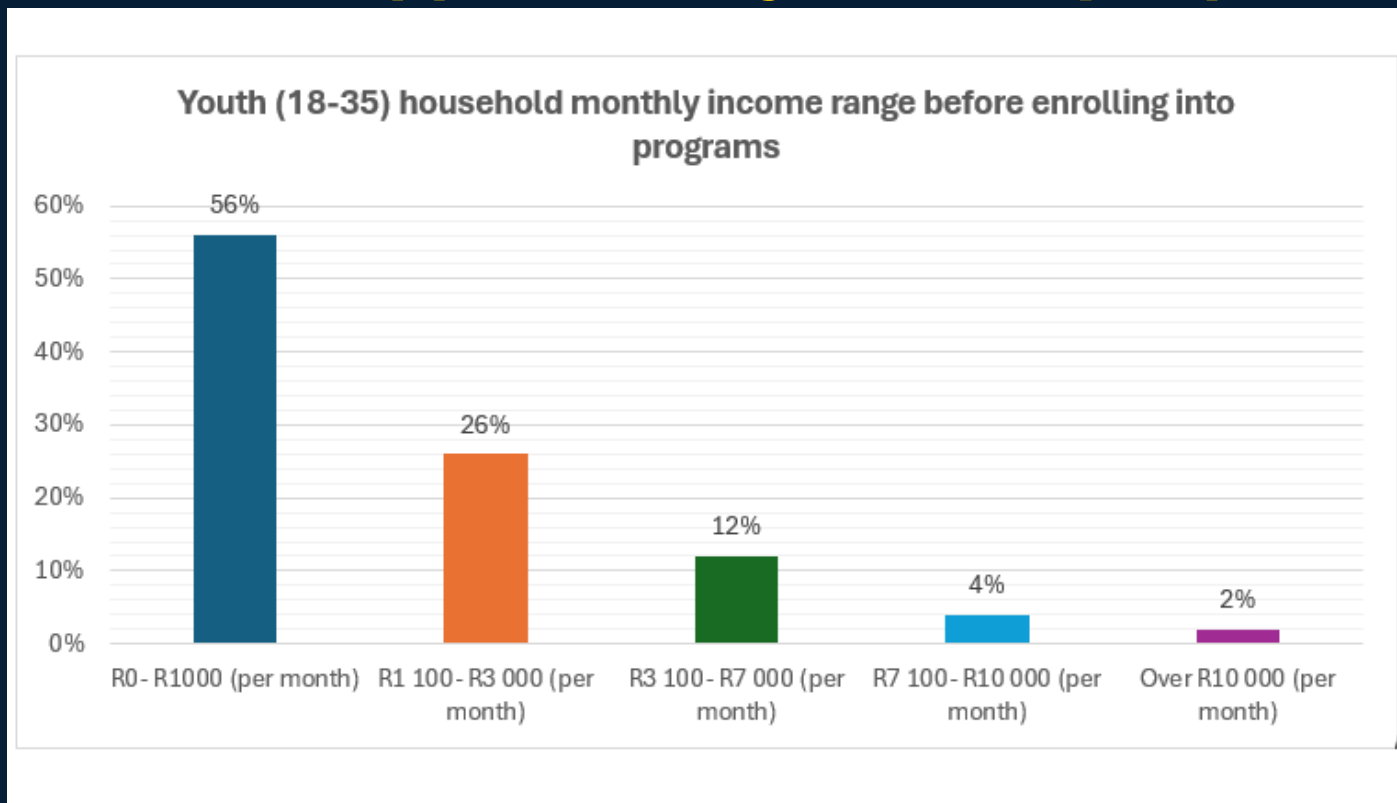


Since the commencement of our programs, as Skills Panda we were able to provide 63% of unemployed youth living with disabilities with job opportunities to date. Before enrolling into our programs, youth living with disabilities were either unemployed, self-employed, receiving social grants or receiving money from their families.

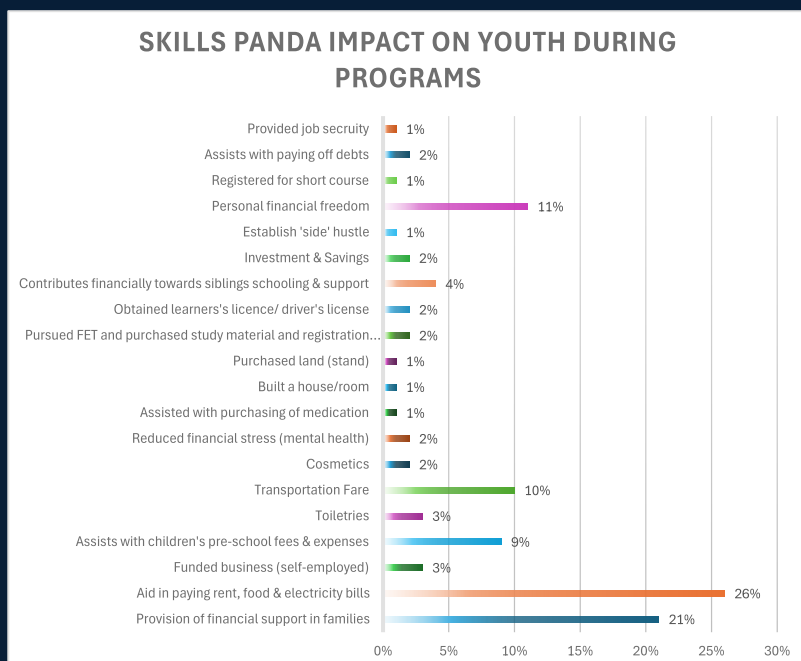
389 youth living with disabilities have been placed in 36 programs as from Jan-Jun 25 in Skills Panda



Financial support through monthly stipends



Before enrolling into our programs, majority of our youth's monthly income contribution in the household ranged between R0-R1000 (refer to above graph) and some were relying on part-time jobs and even at times end up seeking assistance from loan sharks just to get by. Participants enrolled into our programs stated how their lives were improved by the stipends provided in various ways namely;



Based on the survey conducted and feedback received from participants, the stipend is seen more than just monetary value, it created a sense of security and independence where participants were motivated to better themselves by applying for their driver's licenses and learners, injecting funds back to their businesses to generate more revenue for themselves.

For the participants who come from households where they had to rely on social grants, they were able to contribute financially towards the household expenses in which some participants had expressed that the funds saved them from a state of depression. This is the impact that our programs aim to make in the lives of our participants.

Contributing to economic growth by bridging the socio-economic gap for youth living in South Africa

Skills Panda programs provide a strong foundation of skills which makes them adaptable to fit the needs of the participants and strengthen the economic growth in South Africa, as we know having skilled workers can boost productivity and help businesses grow.

Our programs are designed to support the government close socio-economic gaps by offering our participants the chance to make an advancement in their professional and personal development. We aim to empower disadvantaged groups in marginalized communities.



Success Stories



Alumni Participants receiving their start-up kits post theoretical completion of the program. The start-up kit is given to participants to assist in kick-starting their entrepreneurial careers as well as provide further mentorship to the participants.

Alumni Entrepreneurs receiving their start-up kits for laundry and cleaning services. Skills Panda looks forward to watching these young lives become impactful in their communities and make a difference.



Skills Panda conducted a baking program which took a duration of 5 weeks. The participants were equipped with all knowledge of the confectionary world and received their certificate of attendance upon completion of the program. The program was life changing as participants were able to start their own business after completing the program, as well as generate source of income.



Learner Testimonials



Siyabonga Shabangu



Bookkeeping program, from Gauteng

The Skills Panda Bookkeeping Learnership has been a transformative experience, equipping me with essential skills in financial record-keeping, budgeting, and financial statement preparation. It has not only enhanced my professional abilities but also boosted my confidence.

This program has given me a clear career direction, and I am now determined to become a bookkeeper and provide expert financial management services.

By the end of the learnership, I hope to achieve certification and secure a role in a reputable accounting firm.

The learnership has been a game-changing opportunity, equipping me with valuable skills in time management, teamwork, and problem-solving, all of which have boosted my confidence and enhanced my professional growth. It has also clarified my career goals by exposing me to new opportunities and helping me better understand my strengths and areas for improvement.

By the end of the program, I aim to deepen my industry knowledge and secure a permanent role that aligns with my skills and passions.

I aspire to become a leader in my field and inspire others to pursue their dreams

Vutomi Mathebula



Construction program, from Limpopo

I joined the Skills Panda Program in 2024 by uploading my CV on the Skills Panda app. I was then placed at a company, which is located in Midrand.

I was selected to work in the Customer Service Department where I learned how to do the work. At the Customer Service Department I was responsible for generating quotations. Little did I expect, in the current year 2025, I was chosen by my team leader as well as two other members which I had worked with, to return when my contract ends. The people I worked with noticed how hard and smart I worked.

On the 29th of April I went for an interview, this was for the Customer Service Representative position which I successfully obtained. Along my journey I learned that hard work pays off! There are so many people out there who underestimate the potential of learnerships, not knowing that it can boost you in such a strong manner. I will forever be grateful, thank you Skills Panda for granting me the opportunity of the leadership. Every morning you have two choices, continue to sleep with your dreams or wake up and chase them.

Lucia Guiney



Customer Service Learnership Program

Learner Testimonials

Being part of the Skills Panda Contact Centre Management Learnership since last year has been a life-changing experience for me.

I live in a household of 7 people, which is my siblings and I, We recently lost our parents in a tragic car accident and ever since they left us, life hasn't been easy. As the eldest, I've had to step up and become the breadwinner. It's a huge responsibility and staying consistent is not a choice, it's a necessity.

This learnership gave me the skills, structure and support I needed to start building a better future, not just for me, but for my family. I've learned how to manage teams, communicate professionally and work under pressure in a contact centre environment. But more than that, I've gained confidence, purpose and hope.

Thank you to the Skills Panda team for believing in me and helping me grow. I'm not where I want to be yet but I'm on the path and I'm not giving up.

Amahle Gunuza



Learnership Program

Sikindiso Mashego



Technical Support Learnership Program

In March 2023, I took a step that changed my life—I enrolled in a Tech Support program. Over the course of a year, I was placed at a warehouse, where I learned by doing. From troubleshooting hardware to understanding workplace dynamics, every moment helped shape my skills.

I applied because I was genuinely curious about how servers and computers work. But I gained more than just technical knowledge—I built confidence, learned how to collaborate across departments, and discovered how much I'm capable of when given the right support.

The experience pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me grow into a well-rounded technician. It also gave me a glimpse into the world of logistics and supply chains, adding depth to my journey.

Now, I'm focused on continuous growth—professionally and personally. I'm driven to lead, contribute meaningfully, and help others rise too.

"Invest in yourself, stay curious, and trust your growth journey—your mindset determines your future."

With the stipend I received from the Skills Panda Learnership Program, I saw a chance to turn my passion for baking into a business.

After completing my studies at the University of Johannesburg, I faced the daunting challenge of job hunting. Like many young graduates, I was eager to embark on my career, but I wasn't sure where to start.

It was during this search that I came across an opportunity that would change my life – a learnership program.

I decided to apply and was lucky enough to be selected for the Skills Panda Learnership Program. This program not only equipped me with valuable skills but also opened doors to new possibilities.

Nolwazi Khuthama



Learnership Alumni now runs her own bakery: Nolly Sweets

Learner Testimonials

Musa Simka



Bookkeeping program, from Gauteng

Being part of this learnership program has not only expanded my skills in contact centre management but has also reinforced values I live by—humility, respect, and leadership through service. I believe that everyone is gifted in their own way, and what sets me apart is my journey through both business and life. These experiences have taught me to uplift others, remain grounded, and never stop learning.

Through this program, I've gained hands-on experience and formal training in handling customer interactions, using communication systems, resolving queries, and working effectively within a team. It's helped me build a strong foundation in professionalism, service excellence, and time management—skills essential for any role in today's fast-paced customer service environment.

As a leader, I strive to inspire those around me to reach their full potential. There's a Zulu proverb that resonates deeply with me: "*izandla ziyagezana*"—one hand washes the other. It's a reminder that success is built on mutual support and shared growth.

I approach life with ambition and positivity, and I bring energy and purpose into every space I enter. I truly believe that we are all called to something greater, and I embrace my path with gratitude and determination.

Thank you for this incredible opportunity—this is only the beginning.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Skills Panda for the invaluable learnership opportunity afforded to me. The program provided a strong foundation of skills, knowledge, and professional development that significantly contributed to my growth.

I am pleased to share that I am now permanently employed as a Warehouse Representative. In this role, I am responsible for key warehouse operations including receiving and dispatching stock, inventory management, order fulfillment, and maintaining a safe and organized working environment. The knowledge and hands-on experience I gained during the learnership have been instrumental in preparing me for these responsibilities.

Skills Panda has played a pivotal role in equipping me with the practical skills and confidence needed to thrive in a professional setting. Thank you for your dedication to empowering individuals and for making a lasting impact on my career journey.

Simphele Ngcobo



Learnership Alumni

I was incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Skills Panda learnership program. The experience had a meaningful impact on both my personal growth and professional development.

Through the program, I was able to deepen my understanding of key concepts in my field, gain hands-on experience, and build the confidence needed to take on new challenges. The support, mentorship, and structured learning environment provided by Skills Panda helped me grow internally enhancing my self-discipline, motivation, and leadership skills.

The learnership program didn't just add to my knowledge; it helped me step forward in my career. Since completing the program, I've been able to take on greater responsibilities and approach my work with a stronger, more focused mindset.

Thank you to the Skills Panda team for creating such an empowering experience. I'm excited about what the future holds and proud to have been part of this journey.

Siyabonga Okonofua



Technical Support Learnership Program

Skills Panda Book-Club

Available on the PandaBot App

Adult literacy rate refers to the number of people aged 15 and above who can both read and write with an understanding of a short simple statement about their everyday life. Unfortunately, school attendance does not translate to a high participation rate among the youth of South Africa, especially at tertiary education level. In year 2022, Census depicted functional illiteracy rates declined between 1996 and 2022, although females showed a slightly higher rate of illiteracy compared to males. Among the statistics was youth aged 15-34, with only 5.8 million who were actively enrolled in educational institutions.

Skills Panda identified this challenge amongst our young people, which then led us to establishing our very own book-club. Aside from illiteracy rates being found amongst most young people, we discovered that the youth are more like to engage in a book if:

- a)** there is a support group which provides feedback and support, in this way youth struggling to read and comprehend can reach out and share insight amongst each other.
- b)** due to technology impacting our lives one way or the other, we found out that we are more likely to get our youth interested in the love of reading electronically than them going into the store or flea market to purchase a book to read.

Technology has made everything digital which is why we found that majority of our young people prefer accessing their books in that manner plus since our youth are always on their phones 90% of the time so it works to everyone's advantage.

At Skills Panda, we understand that not all young people arrive with the same reading ability – and that's okay. Some have learning barriers, some come from under-resourced schools, and others have simply never had the chance to build reading confidence. That's why our Book Club is youth-led, non-academic, and completely inclusive – designed for real communities, not classrooms.

We don't rely on devices, apps, or data-heavy platforms. In fact, the only time we use technology is to track reading progress through PandaBot, our in-house tool that helps us understand how each young person is engaging with the content – quietly, in the background, without pressure.

Our book club can be accessed via our Pandabot App, if you do not have the App no worries you can download it on Google Playstore or Apple Store.



Through the PandaBot, participants completed reading novel selected for a particular month as part of the Skills Panda book club initiative. The book-club was a success, as it was able to boost the literacy rate of participants thus improving their verbal and written capabilities.



**JANUARY – JUNE
2025 IMPACT REPORT**



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