



...we were on the lookout for partners that could help us address infrastructure. When we ... heard about YouthBuild's model, ... there was immense values alignment: ...it was a very clever way to improve infrastructure while also achieving better outcomes. ... [W]e realised that by using a model like YouthBuild, we can ... upskill young people in the area, [give them] an opportunity and skills and income, ...ensuring that the solutions remain community based.

(TNF respondent)

A groundbreaking partnership,

between the Trevor Noah Foundation and YouthBuildSA designed to address the problems of:

- Deteriorating school infrastructure,
- Minimal ownership of and responsibility for these essential assets,
- A critical shortage of meaningful developmental opportunities for youth.

The partnership delivers **hands-on construction skills** training for young people, equipping them with the technical expertise to conduct **high quality repairs and maintenance to revitalise school infrastructure** and **foster stronger connections between schools and their surrounding communities**, creating a lasting impact on both education and local development.

This is an innovative solution because it has different pillars and solves a variety of problems at once. Firstly, it addresses access to infrastructure while it ensures conducive learning environments for children. At the same time, it ensures the upskilling of young people. While it gives these young people a second chance to be able to be active economic citizens. Additionally, this project includes an element of community asset building ensuring the involvement of the community while ensuring that these communities are also held accountable for maintaining and ensuring that these renovations and this critical infrastructure that has been provided is maintained and protected by the community for its own good and for the good of its own children.

(DBE official)

Since 2021, Trevor Noah Foundation and YouthBuild South Africa have partnered to address the backlog of educational infrastructure in select schools in Braamfischerville, Ivory Park and Eldorado Park in Gauteng Province, South Africa. The participants named the initiative 'Faranani', which means 'working together' in Tshivenda.



How this journey was experienced by a young person²



Aphiwe never thought she could make a difference in her community.

Aphiwe grew up in Braamfischerville. She lived with her Granny and two younger brothers after her Mum died. She managed to get through Grade 12 but was stressed as she had to work out how to help her family.

She heard about a project being launched in her community called the **Faranani Infrastructure Project**. She was excited to join this project - even though she had never really thought about a career in construction - and the chance to improve the school her brothers were.

The application process was tough - over 800 people from Braamfischerville applied - but Aphiwe made it through. Aphiwe was nervous to enter the programme and relieved to see that half the class were young women and the facilitators from YouthBuild made her feel positive that the project could help her find a way through these worries.

The construction skills training covered bricklaying and plastering, carpentry and plumbing, together with occupational health and safety training as well as basic first-aid training.



Aphiwe found that the facilitators were patient, explaining concepts clearly and making sure that everyone understood.

The best part of the training was going to her little brothers' school where she could apply her skills in practice: the team started on the toilet block - this work was really difficult as old pipes had collapsed and needed to be completely replaced.

Aphiwe sometimes even had a snack with her brothers and their friends - they were so happy to show off to everyone that their big sister was helping the school so much.

And **throughout the project there was support:** this included the mental toughness training at the beginning, check-ins to make sure everyone was fine and access to counselling services when participants encountered certain challenges.

When Aphiwe was facing some tough issues because her boyfriend was pressuring her to leave the project, they provided her with support to continue in the project.



Graduation Day was a big event! Aphiwe's Granny, her brothers and even the neighbours came to the ceremony to see her receive her certificates in Building and Civil Construction, and in Plumbing. Aphiwe was excited but she also knew that this was only the beginning of her journey. Again, the team from YouthBuild were there to support her and the rest of the group with aftercare - they helped Aphiwe prepare her CV and practice for job interviews, and they give information on employment opportunities.

But there were not many jobs and Aphiwe decided that she would use her skills to make a special Christmas present for her Granny: she spoke to three of her friends from the project and the four of them worked to completely renovate her grandmother's kitchen while she was away visiting her sister.

Some of her neighbours saw what could be done, and asked the 'Big Four' if they could assist in some renovations at their houses. And the possibility of running a business became something real.

Aphiwe and the team went to the YouthBuild Placement Coordinator who helped them to register their business and reminded them that Joe, the hardware shop owner was very keen to support the graduates. So, the team set up a meeting with Joe who helped them to work out costs for supplies, and to develop a quotation for their first job renovating Mme Makatleho's bakery.

Since then, the 'Big Four' have successfully completed three other projects. And they haven't forgotten about their community - for every project that they get paid for, they spend a small part of the profit doing repairs or maintenance that benefits everyone.

Revitalised school infrastructure



Learners have access to improved and critical infrastructure that encourages them to look forward to a school day in a conducive and safe environment for learning, and educators have safer, cleaner spaces in which to teach.

To date in the project, approximately 200 classrooms accommodating over 20 000 learners have been refurbished across the three sites, and around 143 toilets/sanitation facilities have been repaired and refurbished.

A kitchen for the school nutrition programme was built in one school, and walls to enhance security put up in three schools. Brickwork and paving has been done to enhance the learning and playing experience.

A multi-purpose hall, which will benefit the whole community, is nearing completion at Eqinisiweni Secondary School in Ivory Park, and construction is about to start on a similar hall in Willow Crescent Secondary School in Eldorado Park.

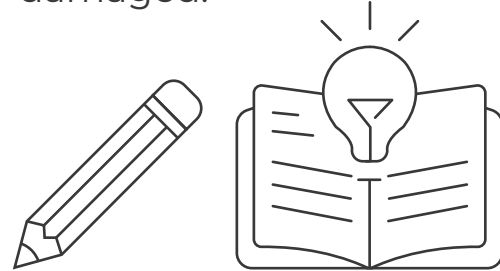
Skilled young people who transition into the labour market



18 months after completion of the project in Braamfischerville, there are double the number of young people in work than there were at the beginning of the project, half the number of young people unemployed, and a significant number of young people studying. **Across the project:**

More than half of the young people who participated in the project have secured various opportunities, which is a significant achievement in the underserved communities where the project operates: 36% of respondents reported that they are currently employed, '5% have started small businesses, 6% are 'hustling' while 7% are pursuing further learning.

Participants have used their skills to earn additional income as well as to improve their own homes and those of their families, and to repair community assets, such as a small bridge over a river that had been damaged.



Participants have become recognised community leaders, offering their new skills to the community with pride and confidence.



Strengthened bonds between schools & communities

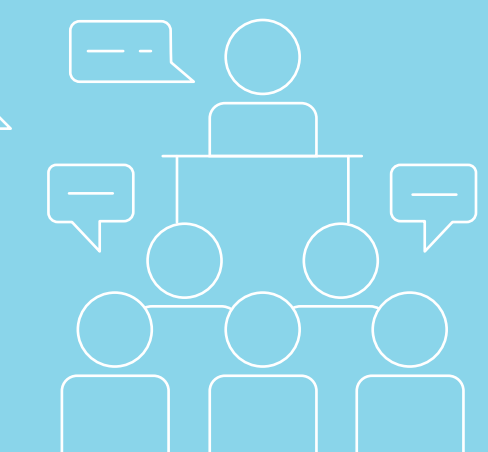


A township supplier has built a stronger network within their community, which has allowed them to grow their business, expand their customer base, and increase sales through the project. This has enabled them to become a recognised brand in the community, which has encouraged them to take on active roles in driving social change, contributing to community development, and helping to upskill local youth.

The project was supported by the Office of the MEC, Ward Councillors, School Governing Bodies (principals, teachers, parents, learners), and FIP participants and their families.



Consultation sessions with communities focused on the project's design, timeline, ward and school selections, participant choices, and expected benefits for the community.

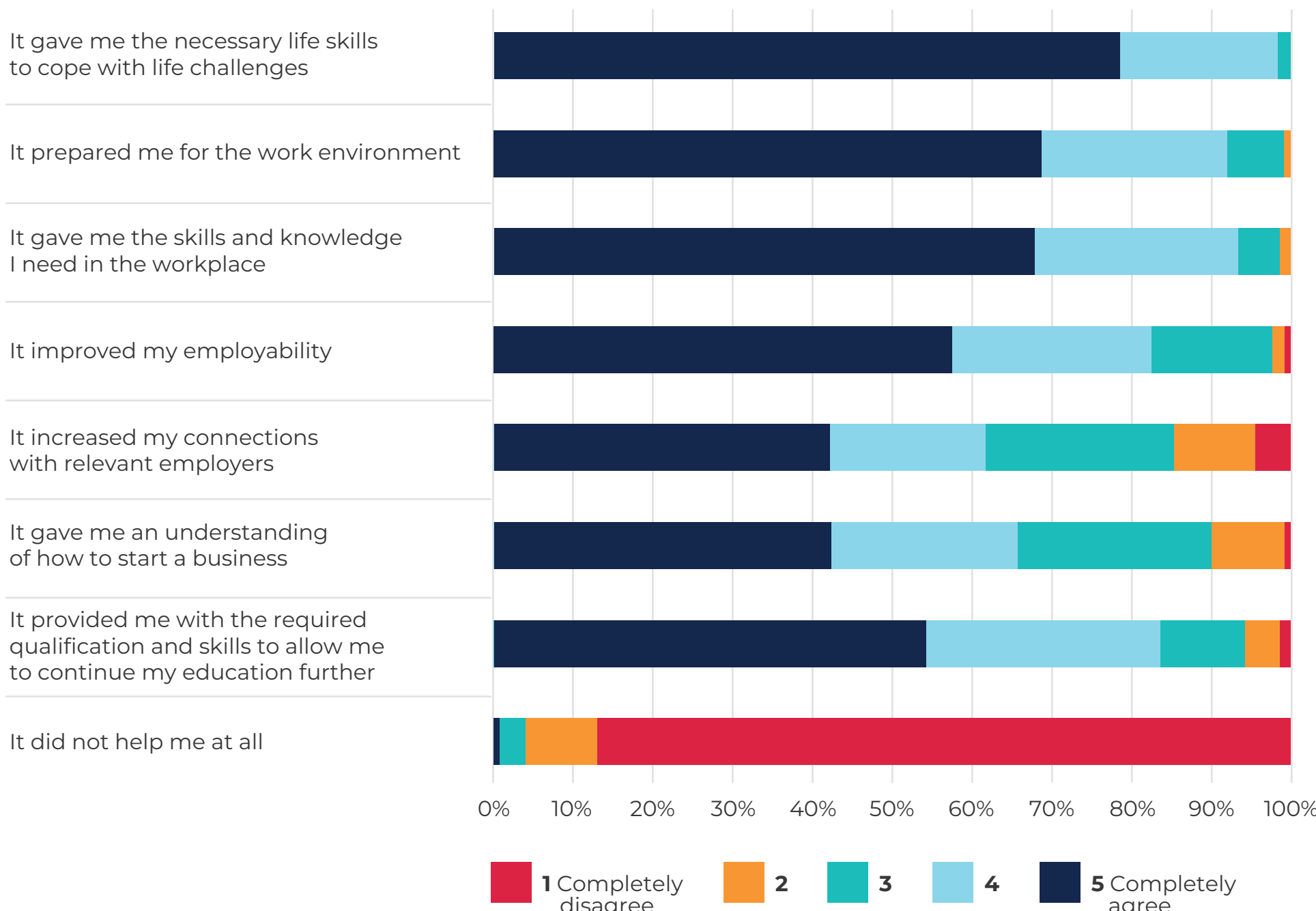


Delivered through an effective partnership model



The core partners of this project, the Trevor Noah Foundation and YouthBuild South Africa, have established a strong partnership built on transparency, mutual respect, open communication, careful planning, and passionate leadership.

What was the most valuable about the programme³?



¹ Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews with project participants, three communities, June 2024

² Composite story, comprised of different experiences shared in the Focus Groups

³ Responses in the CATI survey