



### Setting the scene

During 2019, the conversations of the Post-school Access Community of Practice will focus on entrepreneurship and its role in addressing the high rate of unemployment among South Africa's youth.

Chimene Chetty, our guest speaker at the first meeting of the year, provided an insightful introduction to this theme by surveying entrepreneurial pathways for youth and unpacking what it means to build an entrepreneurial orientation in young people that will empower them to generate income, live fulfilled lives and contribute to South Africa's socio-economic sustainability.



### Overview of the presentation

#### *Entrepreneurial pathways for youth*

Click [here](#) to view the presentation

**Chimene Chetty** describes herself as a 'solutioneer' and connector. She was until recently the Director of Wits Enterprise's Entrepreneurial Wayz (TEWZ) unit and, prior to that, the Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship at Wits Business School. Chimene is also an entrepreneur in her own right, having founded various small businesses and initiatives. She was previously the Regional Director for Southern Africa of Ashoka, a global NGO supporting social entrepreneurship, and has recently been named a Global Goodwill Ambassador. These endeavours have involved Chimene closely in the personal development of others, helping them to achieve the self-actualization that she believes forms the basis for successful entrepreneurship. Chimene is a member of the DHET Community of Practice working group that is developing a framework for entrepreneurial universities.



In framing her presentation, Chimene explained that she would draw on her experiences at Ashoka, her work at Wits University, ideas and practices emerging from the African Union, as well as her own broader reading to share a perspective on the fluid and evolving theme of enabling entrepreneurial development in young people. The presentation would focus on personal empowerment, and would not engage with the parallel theme of enterprise development and its role in job creation and reducing unemployment.

Richard Branson's definition of entrepreneurial development provides a useful lens for this approach:

***"...the important thing about entrepreneurship is that it provides young people with skills that may or may not make them entrepreneurs, but will help them to be more innovative and opportunistic in their future working lives, be it in the public sector, industry, or running their own businesses<sup>1</sup>."***

In this view, developing entrepreneurship is ultimately about developing the person.

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from acceptance speech, doctoral award ceremony at Glasgow Caledonian University, November 1995, quoted in Manu, 1999, p120.

## *Understanding the youth context*

Chimene points to the need to be mindful that young people's outlook on and experience of the world is shaped by forces that are fundamentally different from those that shaped the older generation:

- **Millennials** and members of **Generation Z** have been born into a digital world where technology is 'not a new thing'. They are influenced by global ideas and socialised by people across the world, not only by their own small communities. They are concerned about the environment and the impact of what they do, and look for fairness and accountability.
- The **circular economy** is showing how people can use their own resources to add value, provide services and products, and generate income.
- Other influences are the changes being brought about in society and the workplace by the **Fourth Industrial Revolution**, and the need to prepare young people for the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of the **21<sup>st</sup> Century global economy**.

We continue to put young people into spaces and systems that have little to do with this new world or who they are – yet many young people are making it work. “How much more successful could they be, in terms of self-actualisation and optimising their agency, if we create systems that support who they are? How can we be more entrepreneurial within our own spaces, and come up with our own best practices, to help them?”

## *Building an entrepreneurial orientation*

There is a worldwide movement towards introducing entrepreneurial education (in the broader sense) in schools. At the same time, there is a move towards distinguishing between entrepreneurial development and enterprise development. This gives centre stage to the development of an entrepreneurial orientation in the person, and separates it from setting up and executing a business.

From this perspective, building an entrepreneurial orientation is all about teaching the adaptive skills needed to function effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century global economy. This is about getting young people (to):

- to know themselves; to reflect on and understand why they behave the way they do; to understand the effects of their socialization, as well as stereotyping, generalization, and the influences on them
- to develop emotional intelligence and resilience; to understand diversity and develop inter-cultural intelligence; to understand how to connect with people and groups, and build consensus
- to develop critical thinking skills, creativity and adaptability
- to understand what is happening in big data, technology and design thinking; to understand how the world is structured and how things are inter-connected – so as to be able to make sense of the world and their place in it, to think differently about problems and finding solutions, and to make decisions for the greater good.

The emphasis on developing the person means that the youth can continue to develop and grow, and to remain relevant and responsive in terms of what the world needs of them, no matter what they are involved with, and whether it succeeds or not. We also have to be mindful that skills needs change (and will change more quickly in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy) – so besides creating pathways that enable young people to progress, we also need to give them tools that link them into lifelong learning and reskilling.

## Emerging trends and practices

### On the African continent:

- The AU is promoting the development of policy for youth entrepreneurship by member states
- The Pan African University is developing entrepreneurship programmes linked to critical challenges that the continent is dealing with and to particular sectors that can bring about change, such as water and energy
- A platform to facilitate the sharing of best practice models is being created - currently the many different groups working in this field (development agencies, local NGOs, service providers on behalf of universities, communities of practice) are using a variety of different approaches
- Programme results (e.g. in Mali and Togo) show that people who receive personal development support do significantly better in their businesses than those who only receive support in terms of enterprise development.

### In South Africa:

- A number of programmes are showing success in terms of preparing young people for the world of work and introducing entrepreneurial education, although the focus continues to be on enterprise development.
- An HRDC task team is working on ways of enabling entrepreneurial education in schools – this includes aligning what is already happening, and the challenge of preparing teachers
- DHET Community of Practice working groups are involved with various aspects of entrepreneurial development at post-school level. This includes influencing academics to think entrepreneurially, to become more responsive to a changing world and to view their work in terms of its economic and social impact.

### Internationally:

- Experience is highlighting the benefits of starting early (at primary level) with entrepreneurial education that centres on knowing oneself, understanding problem solving, thinking creatively and learning how to learn.

““What people are starting to realize is that the work we do with young people around empathy and agency – especially in terms of the things that hold them back – is more important than teaching them the technicalities of executing and operating a business.”

Internationally, success stories show that most success factors are linked to individuals who create agency. It is less about the policies and the systems, and more about the people. “We need to become those people, in terms of going back to our spaces and creating agency for this kind of change.”

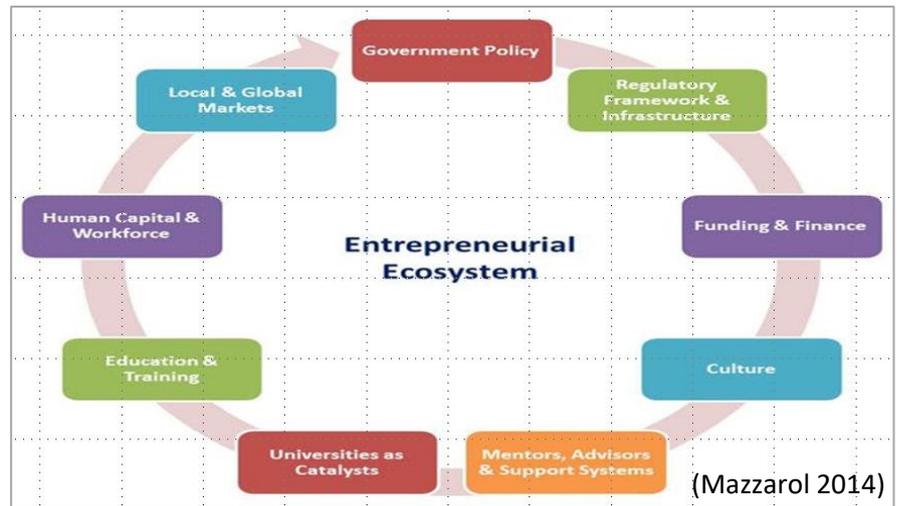
Chimene appealed to those involved in decision-making and resource allocation to think about where they might make the kinds of changes that would disrupt current approaches to entrepreneurship. “We have to make the changes where we are, through our own interventions, instead of waiting for change to happen through policy.”

“We also shouldn’t be making decisions without involving the youth – they challenge us and give us perspective.”

## Entrepreneurial ecosystems

Building youth entrepreneurship and enterprises will require significant shifts and changes, as well as alignments and collaboration, within an ecosystem.

Aligning the different elements will support the creation of more sustainable programmes, allowing appropriate stakeholders and role players to be brought in.



Chimene described the elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the following terms:

**Policy, regulatory framework & enabling infrastructure** – these provide the all-important structure to connect people and create spaces, opportunities and access, but it is crucial to have a good understanding of how everything fits together

**Funding & finance** – government allocates a lot of money for incubators etc, but bureaucracy often gets in the way of this money getting to where it is really needed, and even when it does get there, it does not necessarily have the intended impact. Social investment should be aligned and aggregated to increase its impact.

**Culture** – society’s expectation is of secure jobs in the private or public sectors, and does not support entrepreneurship as a first option for young people. Our country cannot provide jobs for everyone – instead we need to build understanding of what work means, and that it is not necessary to have “a job” in order to work, to add value, and to be able to sustain oneself.

“No institutions or organisations can do it alone, but all can start the process - at whatever point we are, we have to begin by understanding what it is that we need to do to optimise our work.”

**Educational institutions as catalysts** – this will require alignment with the future needs of the country, in the priority sectors, and getting this information to young people so they can make informed decisions on what to do, where and how.

**Human capital, the workforce, local & global markets** – this requires attention to the context within which we create opportunities, which means looking outwards at what Africa and the world need, not just at what is within our borders. Much of the rest of the world has aging populations, but Africa has a demographic dividend of young people and could supply human capital to the rest of the world, provided people have the right skills. We need to expand what we are preparing our young people for, and to look at global markets.



## Considerations going forward

Successful entrepreneurial development calls for mindfulness of these considerations going forward, as well as understanding of ourselves and what holds us back from being agents of change.

<b>Entrepreneurship is not a panacea for all ills</b>	<i>Stop looking at entrepreneurship purely in economic terms as enterprise development, and start seeing it as a critical skill for all young people to have</i>
<b>Disaggregation of entrepreneurial development</b>	<i>View the person separately from the business, and understand that we can have the biggest impact by optimizing the person</i>
<b>Contextual</b>	<i>Policies, interventions and programmes need to be mindful of the differences between contexts (e.g., TVETs/ universities; matrics/ drop outs; rural/ urban)</i>
<b>Generalization and oversimplification</b>	<i>Entrepreneurship development is not an input/ output model, but a circular process that has to be responsive at various levels, and meets young people where they are</i>
<b>Moving from outputs/outcomes to impact</b>	<i>Create well-adjusted, optimised young people who have self-efficacy and are able to pursue their dreams, both for their own sakes and for the betterment of our communities and development as a country</i>
<b>Formal/informal and non-formal</b>	<i>Much is happening in all these spaces, and they all provide opportunities</i>
<b>Experiment</b>	<i>Encourage youth to experiment – for this they need to know what is happening in the rest of the world, to understand concepts and to be open and responsive to the needs that are there</i>
<b>Diversity</b>	<i>This requires young people to be emotionally intelligent and aware of context – it also creates opportunities</i>
<b>Youth-centered</b>	<i>Give young people a voice at the table when decisions are made</i>
<b>Role of champions</b>	<i>Success stories highlight the importance of champions and their role in creating agency – this is proving more impactful than policy and systems</i>
<b>Definitions</b>	<i>These influence how we look at and box the various aspects of entrepreneurship, and help us determine what we want to achieve and how we do it</i>
<b>Inclusion of 21st century skills set</b>	<i>This is what will make our youth relevant</i>
<b>Personal development</b>	<i>Personal initiative training to build proactive mindsets and behaviour is proving to be more effective than giving people only traditional business training<sup>2</sup></i>
<b>Opportunity</b>	<i>Benefitting from the opportunities that exist on the African continent calls for a change in attitude – we have to be less insular and develop empathy for and understanding of what is happening in the rest of Africa (avoid ‘pushing an agenda without being mindful of what the needs are’)</i>
<b>Going back to basics</b>	<i>Constantly going back and reflecting on what we are doing, why we are doing it, what we want to achieve, and what impact we are having</i>

In closing, Chimene reminded the CoP that putting young people through the same process would not guarantee that they would ‘all turn out the same’.

“... school does not mean you will learn, learning does not mean you will have the skills for the labour market, and having the skills does not mean you will have a job – it’s a more complex route.”

<sup>2</sup> ["Teaching Personal Initiative Beats Traditional Training in Boosting Small Business in West Africa"](#)



## CoP comments and questions

This selection gives an indication of the range of responses stimulated by the presentation.

### **Entrepreneurial development and job creation**

- The assumption that entrepreneurship development is the same as job creation is a contradiction that is embedded in our policy – and **the failure to recognise that they are very different** is why so many entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial development initiatives do not work.
- As someone representing the unemployed, I do not want to leave this discussion with the thought that entrepreneurship is not about job creation. **Profitmaking and job creation are fundamental** to entrepreneurship. When we talk about entrepreneurship, we are talking about small business – this is the kind of language that government propagates. We have to start by recognising that entrepreneurship is about an individual coming forward to say, “I have a business idea and want to make profit, but to make profit I have to employ people to do the work, so I need to create jobs”.
- From an enterprise development perspective, the primary issue is to **create a more enabling environment** that will not obstruct young people who set out to establish and operate small businesses. This is a very complex topic. It is also relevant to look at the triple helix model<sup>3</sup> as a driver of innovation, which in turn drives job creation and so forth. The environment for small business in South Africa is not conducive, but this could be changed quite easily and quickly by **removing certain restrictions**. This would bring about an immediate change for the better in the SME environment, and companies would begin to increase in number and grow.
- Everything we have been discussing is really about the unemployed, but we should stop talking about creating jobs altogether. It is unlikely that there are ever going to be more jobs in the world, and we need to talk instead about **equipping individuals**, so they have the wherewithal and notional **skills to go out and create work for themselves**, whether this is on a small scale or something more elaborate. We really must stop making young people believe they will leave school and get jobs.
- The **Fourth Industrial Revolution offers huge opportunities**, and universities should be harnessed to support and commercialise this. However, it would be dishonest to suggest entrepreneurship in terms of the 4IR as a solution to youth unemployment, as the new disruptive industries **do not employ large numbers of people** (although the ecosystem of suppliers that they create down the value chain would help).

*In response, Chimene confirmed the importance of the unemployed as a constituency and noted the need to question government’s view of entrepreneurship as the panacea or cure-all for unemployment.*

*“It is for us to shift our thinking from jobs to livelihoods, to the idea that people do not need ‘a job’ in order to be able to generate income for themselves. Building an entrepreneurial orientation will ultimately empower young people not to look for jobs, but to look for spaces where there are opportunities, where they can work and add value, and give expression to their aspirations. Entrepreneurial development and enterprise development are connected, but the one does not necessarily lead to the other.”*

<sup>3</sup> The triple helix model of innovation refers to interactions between academia, industry and government that foster economic and social development: universities engaging in basic research, industries producing commercial goods and governments regulating markets, and how these roles interact and evolve (Wikipedia)

## Implementing entrepreneurial development

- Properly **developing and equipping educators** to teach the various aspects of entrepreneurial development in schools will be critical.
- There is so much that we can **learn from the world** that could provide us with **building blocks for development and innovation**. The three known pillars of development and progress are basic needs, foundations of development and opportunities. Globally, many countries' profiles show strong first and second pillars (basic needs and foundations of development), with the third pillar (the opportunities), following on naturally. South Africa's profile is skewed: our pillar for opportunity is huge, but the other two pillars are weak. We cannot make progress if we put everything into opportunity but overlook the very important basic building blocks for the progress of our society.
- Both skills development and personal development are essential, but they have to happen in parallel. In practice, personal development is often incidental to the development of skills – and educators are challenged about **how to make personal development less incidental and more explicit**, at the same time as teaching those harder skills.
- Introducing **proper life skills training in schools** that stimulates children's innate ability, builds their emotional intelligence and equips them to become self-actualising would empower them to generate their own livelihoods when they leave school. There would then be no need to create jobs for other people - instead job creation would work in harmony with the needs, with people able to add value by providing services and products.
- We should **aim at what is right here, and at what can we do**. This is exemplified in the Kenyan JauKali approach, meaning 'working under the hot sun'. The youth are innovative and work hard with minimal equipment and facilities to produce a wide variety of goods that the average person would need on a day-to-day basis. They make them from scratch using readily available materials including scrap, and sell them at minimal prices, but in volumes sufficient to make a living. It is about having an open attitude and pushing themselves to the limit, to make it work.



*The JauKali approach illustrates the concept of 'effectuation', which forms part of an entrepreneurial orientation, and is about doing what you can, with what you have, where we are.*

*In contrast, the emphasis placed on the business plan by traditional entrepreneurship programmes has made people think they need 'so much stuff' in order to start, and that without it they cannot do anything.*



**Bridge Project** @BridgeProjectSA · Feb 21

"Young people don't have a problem with aspiring to dreams but there is the missing step of the how to get there and how to be resilient in this process."

#PSACoP #Entrepreneurship #JobAdviceSA



## Group Work

This session began with participants reflecting on their own perspectives and experiences of agency and risk, by engaging with these questions:

- What is my agency? How do I give expression to my agency?
- What is it about me that disables or stands in the way of my agency?
- What is my appetite for risk?
- What conditions would enable me to take on more risk?

The aim was to increase awareness of what young people were likely to experience as they become involved in entrepreneurial endeavours. Discussion was open, lively and wide-ranging.

Based on the discussions, participants then identified what they considered essential elements for fostering entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour that would enable young people to generate sustainable incomes, either by establishing and operating small enterprises, or pursuing other appropriate pathways.

### *Essential elements for fostering entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour*

- An environment (starting at school level) where it is '**safe to fail**' and that encourages experimentation and learning from the process of failure, without the person feeling "I'm a failure"

Statistics show that a person's third attempt to develop a business usually works. The new thinking is that instead of using the incubator model, which supports only the top few ideas, we should help young people to initiate thousands of little start-ups. If most fail, as statistics show will happen, they should be allowed to start again. We need to develop systems that 'help young people to fail' so that they can learn through this experience and take from it what was good ("failure focusses one's attention like nothing else"). We need to foster a comfort with failure because we know that within failure lies the potential for success - but it does not happen overnight.

- **Knowing yourself**, understanding in which direction you might develop, and being given space to develop naturally towards what is interesting and exciting for you
- In the school system, **emphasising the process of learning rather than the outputs**, and creating space for this to happen – this would build children's trust in who they are and what they can do
- Introducing **life skills training at school level to build positive mindsets** ('abundance vs lack mentality') that enable the youth to see and reach out for opportunities in their environment
- Teaching children **how to think and how to learn**, and doing this in a very practical way
- Making it **less difficult and risky to set up and run small businesses** by removing certain regulatory restrictions and creating a more supportive environment for small business development
- **Being honest and realistic** with young people about the world – to avoid the conflict that arises when young people are confronted with real life and find that it that is not what they expected
- In entrepreneurship programmes, **encouraging young people to 'just do it'** – through this process they would learn about the world and the value of the hard work that delivers the output
- The **older generation trusting the younger generation** to do the 'right thing', being willing to hand over a share of power to them ("be willing to risk allowing the younger generation to take the risk"), and being open to seeing value in their approaches, e.g. 'working smart, not hard'.



## Facilitator's summing up

In rounding off the session, facilitator Charles Marriott highlighted several key points:

This session confirmed the importance of diversity in these discussions – the conversation benefitted from having both the personal and the enterprise development aspects represented, and by hearing from a young voice.

Many of the qualities that one looked to promote in entrepreneurial development were inherent in children, but were disabled by the influence of the adults in children's lives. The issue was how to encourage that native intelligence and creativity while providing healthy boundaries to guide children's social development.

It was also interesting how the concept of 'relationship' had found its way into the conversation – this showed explicitly that even when one approached this topic from an economic perspective, the relational dynamics lay at the centre.

People had allowed themselves to be vulnerable with each other, as well as explorative and robust. In this respect, the CoP had modelled much of what this session was advocating in terms of entrepreneurial development.



## CoP takeaways from the session

**Closing comments** expressed appreciation for the quality of the conceptual input and the conversation, noting that they provided value on both a professional and a personal level. Here is a sampling of comments:

- I feel more positive about our youth – if everyone could share our thinking with others in their environments, we would see changes
- I will look differently at young people in future – there is a lot of mind searching that I need to do
- Learning isn't always comfortable – I liked the emergence of agency; this is so important
- This has been an opportunity to broaden my perspective – to hear from others who can add texture and nuance to what I know

The importance of looking more closely at the role of creativity<sup>4</sup> in entrepreneurship was also noted.

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<sup>4</sup> *Before the Gates of Excellence - the determinants of creative genius* by R Ochse provides a comprehensive survey of the role of creativity in entrepreneurship



## Attendees

Name	Organisation:
Andre Hattingh	North-West University
Benter Okelo	BRIDGE Innovation in Learning
Charles Marriott	Deliver
Chimene Chetty	Presenter - Lologo
Elza Hattingh	North-West University
Jade Pieterse	BRIDGE Innovation in Learning
Jenny Dry	Instituted for Balanced Living
Jocelyn Smith	JS & Associates
Lisa Ann Catano	Anti-Bullying and Anger Management Specialist in Education
Margaret Johnson	Midlands Community College
Margie Vorwerk	BRIDGE Innovation in Learning
Plaatjie Mashego	Analyst on unemployment
Randy Mremi	funda afrika
Sibusiso Lukhele	Tshikululu Social Investments
Susan Lado	Khulisa Management Services
Yvonne Pennington	Independent
Zarina Khan	GIZ
Zelda Fynn	Sci-Bono Discovery Centre
Thando Moeng	BRIDGE Innovation in Learning
Sandile Mthanthi	Sci-Bono Discovery Centre