

Media Release

Roche tackles SA's youth unemployment rate through the YES Programme

Johannesburg, 1 July 2022: Roche tackles SA's youth unemployment rate through the YES Programme

According to STATS SA's Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 63,9% of South Africa's youth between 15 and 24 years and 42,1% of those aged between 25 and 34 years are unemployed. With employment rates higher than the national average of 34,5%, the burden of the country's unemployed youth paints a sombre picture of the future of this generation¹.

As a result, Roche is playing its part in curbing the rising youth unemployment rate by partnering with the Ubuntu Pathways Youth Employment Services (YES) programme - an initiative aimed at upskilling the youth in impoverished communities and equipping them with critical work readiness skills.

David Gibbons, General Manager at Roche Pharmaceuticals SA, explains that the YES programme is a joint venture between business and government and aims to empower unemployed youth aged 18-34 by providing them with the relevant skills required to enter and advance the workforce.

"The YES programme solves a problem that many South African youth are faced with - the inability to find a job without the relevant experience," he adds. "The situation is contradictory, with most unable to gain the necessary experience without working in their fields of interest."

Since October 2021, Roche has provided 15 young people with the relevant funding and tools to succeed in their desired fields. To date, YES has seen over 157 youth advancing through the programme, with 44% being absorbed into permanent employment positions. We hope to see the same year on year in terms of the programme.

Candidates begin their journeys by meeting with career counsellors to discuss and plan their desired career paths and aspirations and engage in skills workshops that include topics such as employability skills, one-on-one professionalism coaching, CV-building, and financial and computer literacy.

"Roche is committed to engaging in sustainable projects and partnerships that make a lasting impact and strengthen communities. In partnership with local institutions, we support programmes designed to inspire children and youth in the communities we operate in," concludes Gibbons.

"The past few years have been incredibly difficult for our community. When the pandemic hit, virtually everyone in our region lost their jobs. Ubuntu's Job Skills Training Programme was instrumental in being able to get virtually all of our graduates back to work. This new

partnership with Roche will allow us to reach hundreds more young people in an economy that is struggling and continue to transform the lives of individuals and families in our area.”
--Ziyanda Ndyoko, External Relations & Job Skills Training Manager, Ubuntu Pathways

[ENDS]

Reference:

1. Statistics South Africa : [cited 2022 Jun 28]. Available from:
<https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=15407#:~:text=Year%2Don%2Dyear%2C%20the,34%20years%20in%20Q1%3A%202022.>

About Roche

Founded in 1896 in Basel, Switzerland, as one of the first industrial manufacturers of branded medicines, Roche has grown into the world’s largest biotechnology company and the global leader in in-vitro diagnostics. The company pursues scientific excellence to discover and develop medicines and diagnostics for improving and saving the lives of people around the world. We are a pioneer in personalised healthcare and want to further transform how healthcare is delivered to have an even greater impact. To provide the best care for each person we partner with many stakeholders and combine our strengths in Diagnostics and Pharma with data insights from the clinical practice.

In recognizing our endeavor to pursue a long-term perspective in all we do, Roche has been named one of the most sustainable companies in the pharmaceuticals industry by the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices for the thirteenth consecutive year. This distinction also reflects our efforts to improve access to healthcare together with local partners in every country we work.

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About Ubuntu Pathways

Ubuntu Pathways breaks the cycle of poverty by providing South Africa’s most vulnerable children with an integrated support system of health, education, and household stability. They have pioneered a pathway out of poverty for over 2,000 vulnerable children, from first steps to first jobs. Ubuntu serves a disproportionately vulnerable population, including people living with HIV, immuno-compromised children, and elderly heads of households. Independent research has proven Ubuntu’s long-term impact: every R1 invested in Ubuntu leads to an R8.70 lifetime earnings increase for a child and R2.20 net gain for society.

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