

The Uncertainty of Youth and Unemployment

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On 5 February 2026, Khanya College hosted a Journalism workshop at the Workers Museum Cottages in Newtown. The workshop was aimed at training activists with a new set of skills, particularly writing and organising skills.

The group participated in a collective discussion about journalism and the need for an alternative working class newspaper to highlight the struggles and victories of working class communities.

Later in the day, the group was tasked with conducting interviews about the most pressing issues in working class communities, where members come from. The writer spoke to people in the streets of Newtown about unemployment. With a lot of youth around Newtown, the writer targeted a group but struggled to communicate with them due to a language barrier. The group consisted of deaf youth. Communication with them happened through writing on paper, and they were able to take the interview.

The students from Braamfontein, in Johannesburg, told the writer that they were not hopeful of finding employment after completing their studies. One student became emotional. He signed that he did not know; the uncertainty was glaring. The young fellow was unsure of the future.

When asked if the government is doing enough for the people who are living with disabilities, one student wrote “yes” on a piece of paper. He said that people should create jobs for themselves and not rely on the government. He said that people should empower themselves and start their own businesses to help the government cut down unemployment.

Speaking to a street vendor selling sweets and cigarettes nearby, he said that he preferred working for himself to make a living. The street vendor said that crime is very high, attributing it to unemployment. He said that girls as young as 13 were being exploited through cheap labour. He mentioned that on a good day, he makes enough money to sufficiently provide for his family. He concluded by saying that it is hard to find work.

The uncertainty facing young people is deeply concerning. Young people should have a clear sense of direction after completing their studies. But, as things stand, many students at different universities and educational institutions remain unconvinced about their chances of quickly finding employment after graduating. Many graduates continue to sit at home without jobs long after finishing their qualifications.

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