

Unemployment Devastating Youth of Thokoza

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Youth unemployment is one of the most devastating economic issues affecting the country. We spoke to community members in the neighbourhood of Phola Park, in Thokoza, east of Johannesburg. And, from those interviews, at least 70% of the respondents were youthful Black men and women who are affected by unemployment.

The high rate of youth unemployment is quite alarming, especially to note that this issue is so high, locally we expected that it is even more staggering nationally.

After speaking to random community members, we met in a small part of Thokoza, it became clear that unemployment is an issue to the youth in the area.

“Youth unemployment is really, affecting me as an individual because I have three kids that I must provide for, and really, I never planned to have so many kids at an early age but poverty led me to do ungodly things for money in the name of survival which therefore resulted in these unplanned children which I am not able to fend for,” said Asavela Msomi.

Unemployment deepens poverty, many people have no means to live.

“Unemployment has been there and will always be there for as long as the same people who should be saving us are the very same people oppressing us, I have been in and out of prison because I was committing crimes in the neighbourhood, trying to make a living for myself,” shares Vusimuzi Ntaka who has been to prison over poverty crimes.

Ntaka said that he has been trying to submit his curriculum vitae for job positions, but has never gotten a job causing him to resort to crime

Youth should take a stand on the issue of unemployment, especially for youth rather than wait for the government or a saviour. Youth should find a way to be productive in the meantime.

“I am a graduate of the University of Johannesburg, I obtained a diploma and [later a] degree in the LLB sector, and I have been looking for a job for years now, with no luck. What I am saying is that ‘time waits for no man’, as I am currently a street vendor selling snacks and refreshments for a living whilst sitting on a degree...Stand up for yourself Black child,” Zenande Nombasa, a young black woman told us, taking another path to resistance.

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