



Final report
March 2012

Trading Up? An evaluation of JASA's Entrepreneurship Academy programme

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CITY & GUILDS
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An evaluation of JASA's Entrepreneurship Academy programme

Kathleen Collett and Chris Gale
Final report

Foreword



Entrepreneurship is a critical activity in any market but more so in emerging markets. It allows enterprising citizens to apply their mind to unlock new value and create new wealth and jobs in parallel to the existing formal markets. As the world continues to face a challenging economic environment, job creation has become a priority for nations across the globe. In times such as these, nations are relying on the formal economy to foster entrepreneurial development and spirit – to encourage citizens to identify their own opportunities.

Junior Achievement South Africa, of which Citi is a proud sponsor, plays a vital role in educating and encouraging young people from an early age to be an entrepreneur and prepare for life after school. The organisation's reach encompasses the African continent and raises the youth's awareness of economic issues, teaches them entrepreneurial and life skills, provides them with an understanding of the business world, and enhances their sense of personal responsibility through practical business experience.

Encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit is the key to job creation and improving competitiveness and economic growth throughout market economies. Particular emphasis should be placed on entrepreneurship education in rural areas, where unemployment is high.

What has come to light in this report is that a country such as South Africa can benefit immensely by developing young people to identify opportunities and take action, both in the informal economy and in the formal sector.

As a member of the formal sector, and through its support of Junior Achievement, Citi is working towards changing perceptions of entrepreneurship

as an alternative career and foster enterprise development.

Traditionally, learners have been encouraged to complete school and then proceed onto tertiary education. As a nation, we need to let our youth know that this is by no means the only route to success – there are a multitude of opportunities. Enterprise education improves the chances of business success. Successful enterprise development is thus not only important for the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) whose vision is played out in focus areas such as Economic Empowerment; SMME Development; Industrial Development; Trade, Export & Investment; Financial Assistance; and Legislation and Business Regulation but for South Africa as a whole.

Enterprise education and development is particularly important in a country such as South Africa because it can make a positive contribution to job creation and therefore to poverty alleviation.

Reports such as these are welcomed in that they depict an organisation delivering successful programmes to young people. At the same time, there is a real need to understand their impact and to assess strategies for developing this approach on a wider scale.

On behalf of Citi South Africa I commend the Junior Achievement South Africa Entrepreneurship Academy Programme and welcome the City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development's independent evaluation which provides invaluable evidence for JASA and other organisations engaged in enterprise development on the impact of the programme and lessons learnt for future implementation.

Donna Oosthuysen
Chief Country Officer, Citi South Africa

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Organisation overview

City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development (CSD)

CSD is a not-for-profit research and development body for vocational education and training. It works to influence and improve skills policy and practice worldwide through an evidence-based approach. It is part of the City & Guilds Group.

The desire to integrate evidence into skills policy and practice sits at the heart of what we do. That's why we work closely with policy makers, practitioners and researchers to:

- › understand current challenges and find evidence-based solutions
- › provide research findings that are relevant and practical to practitioners and learners
- › link research, policy and practice by sharing evidence and good practice
- › deliver skills development projects to test research findings and create good practice models.

For further information about our work and how you can use our resources, visit www.skillsdevelopment.org

Junior Achievement South Africa (JASA)

JASA aims to prepare young people for life after school by raising their awareness of economic issues, teaching them entrepreneurial and life skills, providing them with an understanding of the business world and enhancing their sense of personal responsibility by offering practical business experience through a variety of different courses.

As a member of Junior Achievement Worldwide, one of the largest business education organisations in the world, operating in over 100 countries, JASA was established in 1979 to address the serious unemployment situation in the country, with particular reference to young people.

For further information about JASA, visit www.jasa.org.za



Executive Summary



Recent years have seen an increase in youth unemployment internationally. In South Africa, where the overall levels of unemployment are high, around 49% of South Africans aged between 15 and 24 years old were unemployed in 2010 (National Treasury, 2011). The need to address this problem has led to a growing focus by governments and organisations on enterprise training – an approach which may offer young people the opportunity to develop the skills, attitudes, personal qualities and knowledge needed for self-employment.

The delivery of effective enterprise training is not without challenges, however, and the outcomes of enterprise training projects internationally are variable. More evidence on the effectiveness of different approaches to teaching enterprise education is needed.

This report presents findings from an evaluation conducted by the City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development (CSD) of Junior Achievement South Africa's (JASA) new Entrepreneurship Academy.

The evaluation is based on surveys and interviews with the participants of the three pilot schools running the JASA Entrepreneurship Academy. Two of the schools were based in townships in Johannesburg, and one was based in Hlau Hlau, a rural area in Mpumalanga. All three schools serve disadvantaged, predominantly black communities. The evaluation focused on changes in learners' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and business skills, as well as their experience of the programme.

Key findings

1. Increased propensity to become entrepreneurs

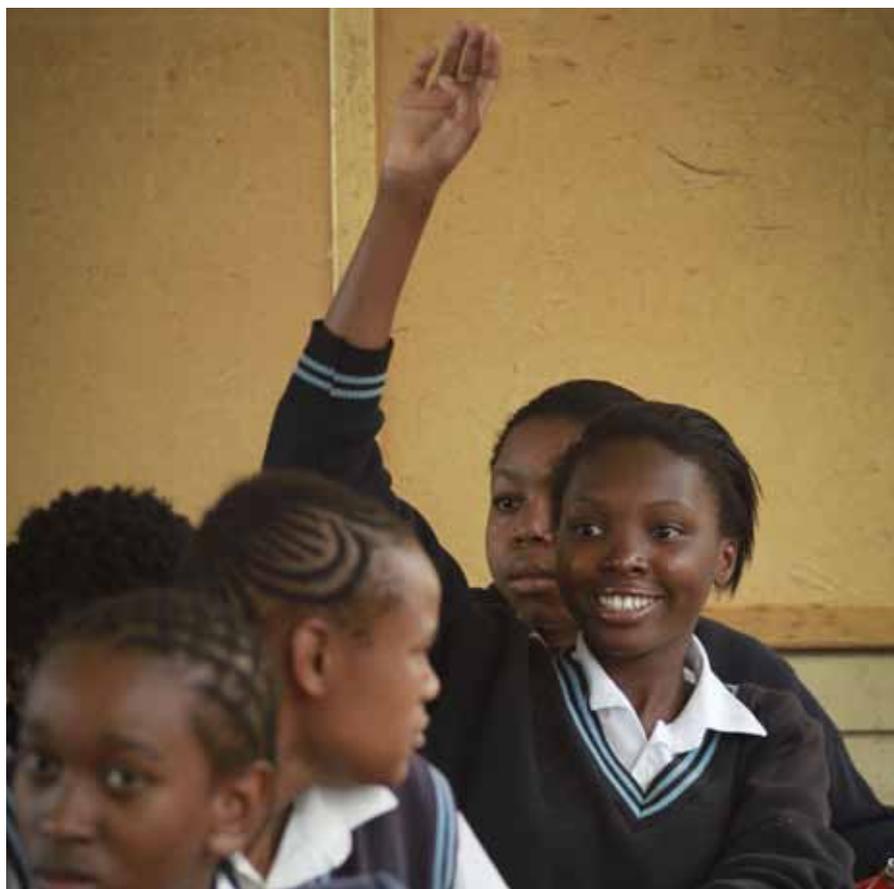
Learners reported significant changes in their perceptions of the financial prospects of entrepreneurship, improvements in family and friends' attitudes toward entrepreneurship as a career path, and increased confidence that they would be able to undertake a range of activities involved in setting up a business. Even though learners' enthusiasm for entrepreneurship was tempered by their increased realism about the challenges associated with it, these changes can reasonably be expected to translate into a higher number of learners engaging in entrepreneurial activities than would have been the case had they not been exposed to the programme.

2. Developing the attitudes and abilities to run an enterprise successfully

Learners reported significant improvements in their knowledge about business principles including supply and demand, income and profit, and competitive advantage. They also felt that their practical business skills had improved after the course: they felt more confident identifying customers, setting prices, drawing up a budget, and writing a business plan. It can be expected that these changes will have a positive impact on the success rates for those learners who do start their own business relative to success rates if the programme had been absent.

3. Developing transferable skills for employment and self-employment

The evaluation found that the programme was effective in developing transferable skills such as teamwork, communication and planning. Learners also indicated that they had significantly more confidence in presenting themselves to employers after completing the programme. The high rate of youth unemployment in South Africa makes finding a job a formidable challenge for the young people engaged on these courses, and this context will clearly affect the ultimate outcomes of the programme. Nevertheless, the evaluation suggests that they will be better prepared to make use of the employment opportunities that are available.



Recommendations

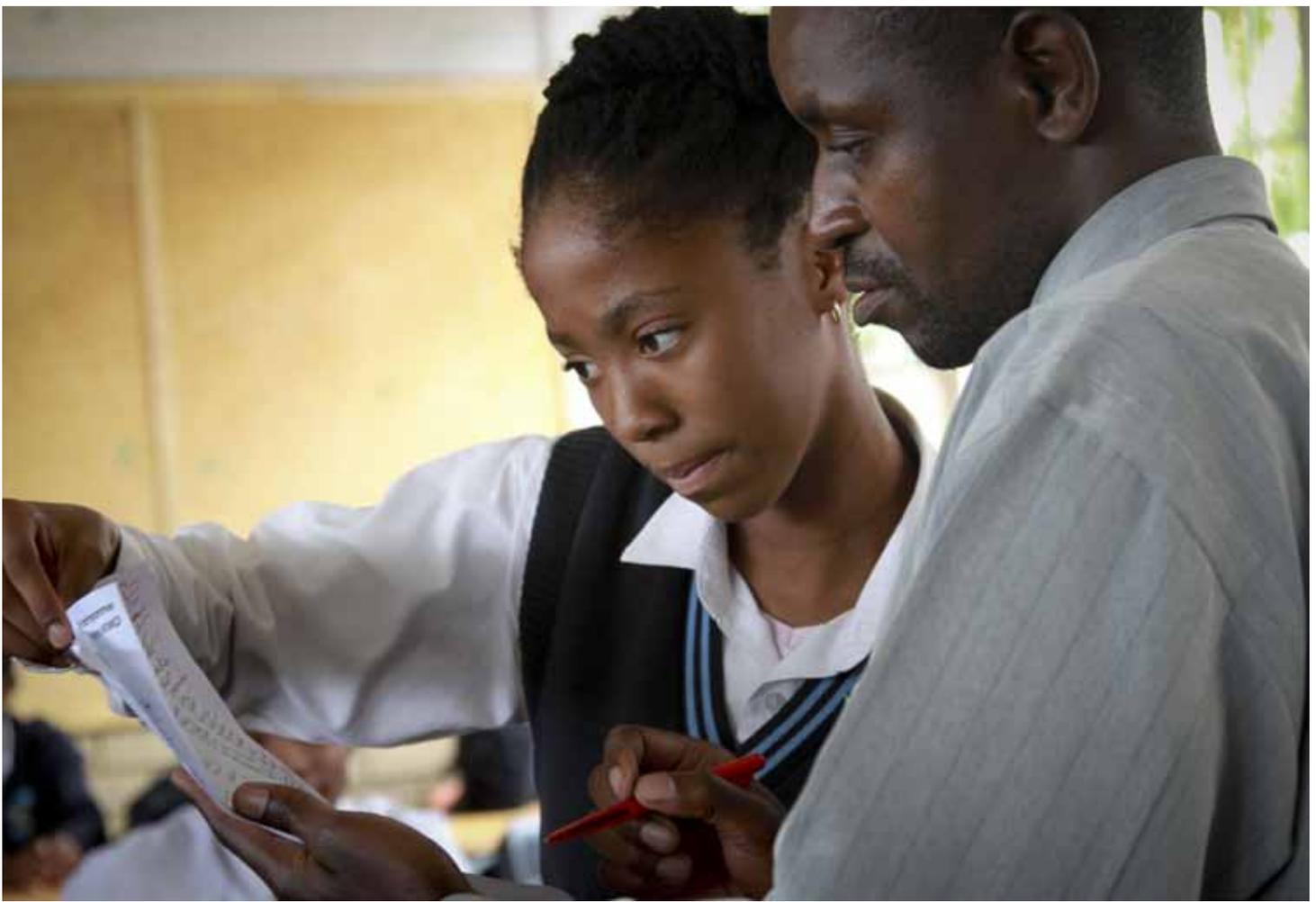
Structuring programmes

- › The **timing and duration** of the programme are the key to limiting dropout rates and ensuring that learners are able to learn effectively. Courses need to be scheduled at a time and location that is accessible to all, and need to be short and dynamic to ensure learners remain effectively engaged throughout the duration of training. Attempts to fit too much information into classes may result in disassociation with the programme as a whole.
- › Understanding the **context within which learners are operating** is essential to improve the effectiveness of programmes. Providing programme content which does not take into account the financial and personal constraints that individuals face both in completing a programme and starting an enterprise may cause disillusionment.
- › In order to **reduce the number of dropouts**, an initial assessment of the knowledge levels and capacity of the learners may be a way of identifying whether individuals have the ability to complete the programme and whether they have any additional support needs.
- › The most effective **language of instruction** must be taken into account for all the locations in which a programme is rolled out. A balance needs to be struck between ensuring the learners can understand the content of the programme, and develop confidence in speaking the main business language of the country.

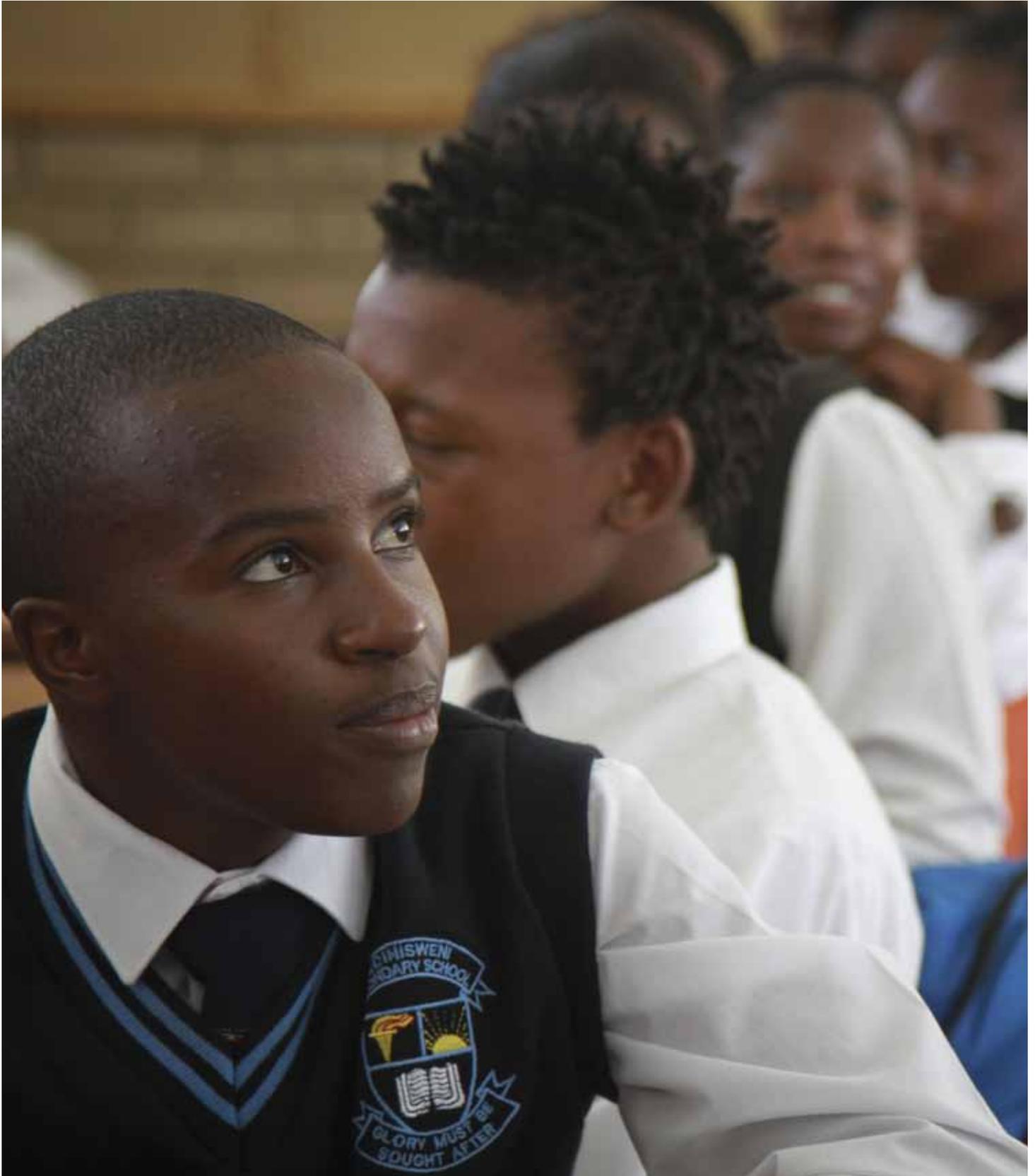
› A focus on developing **self-confidence, employability skills and soft skills** is essential to any enterprise programme. These are all skills that individuals require regardless of their chosen career pathway, and improved confidence was consistently highlighted by learners as the key attribute they had developed through the programme.

Supporting learners

- › The **facilitator or trainer** is the most important factor in ensuring the programme is successful. Providing sufficient preparation and training to facilitators/trainers is therefore essential. This includes pre-programme training, effective support materials and dynamic feedback channels throughout the duration of the programme.
- › **Learner support materials** should be aligned with the contextualised needs of the learner. The content should relate directly to the environment and location in which the learner is operating. The support materials should provide a key reference point for learners throughout the practical elements of the programme.
- › Starting and maintaining a **mini-enterprise** is an extremely valuable way for learners to put theory into practice and to develop a greater understanding of the pitfalls and risks of running a business. This learning would not be possible in the classroom, and future programmes should ensure that there is a strong focus on the practical application of business ideas. It must also be noted that managing expectations in terms of the financial commitments required from students for this component is essential.



- › The assessment of the impact of programmes should not be focused exclusively on the number of learners who move into self-employment upon completion. Instead, **programme indicators** must take into account soft skills and self-efficacy development, alongside the take-up of technical enterprise knowledge.
 - › It is important to **recognise learners' achievements**, so that the substantial amount of time and effort that they must put into the programme in order to complete it is rewarded. This could take the form of certification, or could take place through a less formal community event.
- Community engagement and developing business linkages**
- › **Engagement with the wider community** is a potential way of raising the esteem of self-employment and has been previously shown to be an important approach for learners to gain greater support for their enterprise.
 - › Engaging **guest speakers** (particularly local business people) to share their experiences in enterprise was an important way to give grounding to key components. It also provided learners with an aspirational figure that they could relate to.
 - › Students who gained **exposure to businesses or work experience** felt they gained valuable insights and had developed an improved understanding of the theoretical issues they had discussed in classes. This is a factor that should be built into future programmes to improve learners' understanding of the career options open to them.
 - › Establishing mechanisms through which learners and facilitators are able to share relevant information and learn from each other through **peer exchanges** may be helpful for students to begin to build up their own support network.



1

Introduction

Youth unemployment has increased internationally in recent years, with the ILO (2010) reporting that the number of economically active young people who are unemployed increased from 11.9% to 13% between 2007 and 2009 alone. The problem of youth unemployment is particularly severe in countries where formal employment is low throughout the labour market. In these situations, there is a strong case that education should prepare young people for self-employment as well as enabling them to take advantage of the employment opportunities that do exist. In South Africa, youth unemployment is exceptionally high: in 2010, 49% of South Africans aged between 15 and 24 years old were unemployed (National Treasury, 2011).

Enterprise training is one approach through which governments and organisations are looking to address this issue. Under the assumption that these skills will lead to more successful entry into self-employment, there is perceived to be a great need to focus on the development of enterprise skills in young people, if the education system is to fulfil its role in preparing young people for economic independence.

The delivery of effective enterprise training in schools is challenging, however, with many programmes failing to deliver the skills which support the creation of viable businesses. More evidence on the effectiveness of different approaches to teaching enterprise education is therefore urgently needed in the South African context (as it is internationally) to identify the impact and effectiveness of different approaches. In light of this, in August 2011 CSD conducted an evaluation of JASA's new Entrepreneurship Academy programme to assess the impact that this programme has had and what may be learnt for other programmes.

The terms 'entrepreneurship', 'enterprise' and 'small business management' are sometimes used interchangeably in both academic literature and in practice. There are large overlaps in the skills required for initiating and developing new ventures, and the management of small businesses.

The terms 'enterprise education' is widely used to refer to the development of personal attributes (being enterprising) with the aim of developing an opportunity-seeking, pro-active workforce which can make existing businesses more competitive and allow entrepreneurship to flourish, and this is the way the term is used in this report.¹

¹ Jones, B. & N. Iredale (2010). Enterprise education as pedagogy. *Education & Training* 52 (1): 7-19.

2

The case for enterprise education

2.1 Enterprise education in the context of rising youth unemployment in South Africa

South Africa's high youth unemployment mirrors the growth in youth unemployment in the Sub-Saharan region, and internationally. The ILO (2005, p. 5) notes that 'between 2003 and 2015 there will be more first-time jobseekers than ever before. Decent employment opportunities for young people will need to grow substantially to meet this challenge. [In addition], these pressures will be greatest in the regions with the largest expected labour force growth'. Sub-Saharan Africa has a forecasted growth of 30 million young people over this period who will be looking for pathways into the labour market (*ibid*). Alongside this, many of the new jobs that are being created are in the informal sector, rather than being formal employment (Freedman, 2008). De Largentaye (2009) shows that during the 1990s, informal work in the non-agricultural sector already represented 43% of employment in North Africa; 57% in Latin America; 63% in Asia; and 75% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Equipping young people to cope with these labour market conditions is a key policy challenge internationally. In South Africa, these challenges are particularly acute. South Africa has extremely high levels of overall unemployment, with official figures showing it currently at 25% (real figures are almost certainly higher than this) (Statistics

South Africa, 2011). The growth in jobs has not kept pace with population growth since 1994. McGrath and Akoojee (2007, p. 423) show that from 1995-2002, about '1.6 million net new jobs were created in the South African labour market, an average growth rate of 2.1% per annum (including informal work). However, over the same period, more than 5 million people entered the labour market'. The impact of unemployment falls disproportionately on previously disadvantaged groups, with **only 29% of new black labour market entrants able to find work between 1995 and 1999, compared to 50% of Indians, 70% of coloured people² and 75% of whites** (*ibid*). This is a major reason that, although economic growth has been reasonably strong since the end of apartheid, the beneficiaries of growth have been unevenly distributed, and economic growth has often not translated into wide-scale poverty reduction.³

Inequalities in the education system contribute to the disproportionate number of those from previously disadvantaged groups who are unemployed. Although the formal racial segregation of the South African education system ended in the early 1990s, access to high quality education remains very unequal (McGrath & Akoojee, 2007). This has translated into skills level inequalities, which in turn has an impact on employment potential. According to Daniels (2007) the efforts post-1994 to change the legacy of the apartheid education system⁴

² Although there is no registered definition, 'coloured' is widely used as a neutral description for people of mixed ethnic origin.

³ The 2008 Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2007) shows that in 2000, 62% of South Africans lived on less than US\$2 a day. These statistics are, however, heavily skewed along racial lines. When these figures are compared with stratified figures from 2001 which showed that only 3% of whites are below the national poverty line, in comparison to 60% of black South Africans, the divisions that exist within the country are very clear (National Treasury, 2003; discussed in Smith, 2010).

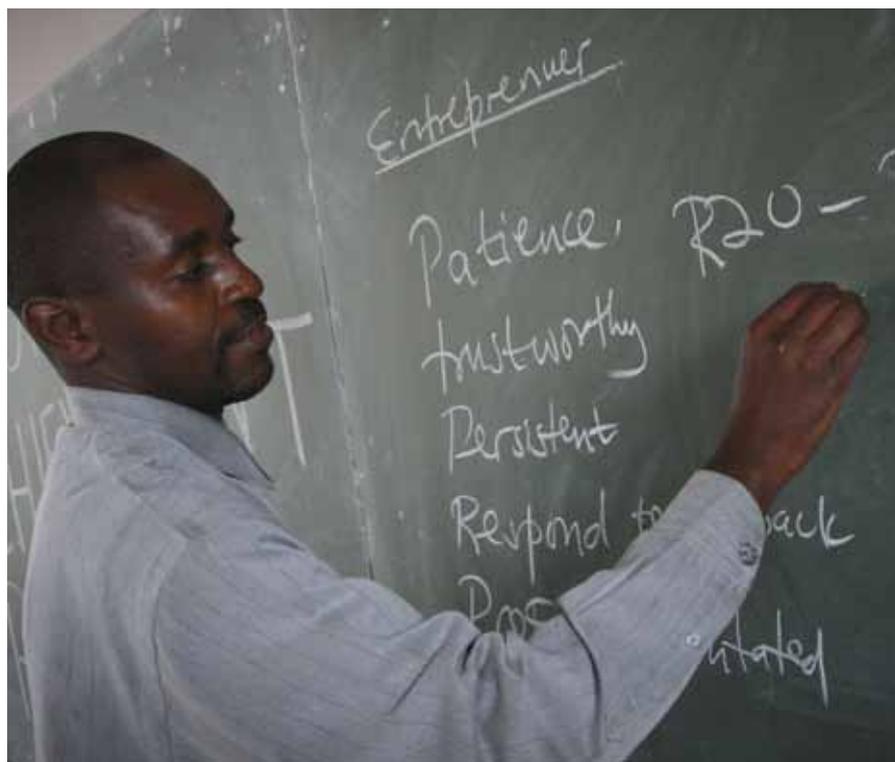
⁴ The system of education during apartheid enforced a separation of races in all education institutions.

have not had a large enough impact on skills levels and there continues to be a huge polarisation of high skills and low skills, a remnant of apartheid industrial development paths, where skills were highly racialised and gendered. Black (and particularly female) South Africans were often unable to access skills, or where training was available they were unable to acquire any sort of certification (McGrath & Akoojee, 2007).

A lack of skills prevents many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds from participating in the formal sector, and these same young people often lack both the skills and capital to begin successful enterprises. The notion of a 'second economy' has taken hold of discourse around economic growth in South Africa: the idea is that there is a 'first economy' which is reserved for those that have been able to take advantage of the country's economic growth after apartheid, and a 'second economy' of those who are unemployed or in insecure and very low wage employment, poor, and often unable to access even the most basic of services. While this notion is oversimplified, it does capture the extreme divergence in the employment prospects of South Africans, depending on their economic starting point.

It has also been argued that a lack of skills is hampering South Africa's economic growth. The National Enterprise Survey (1998) showed that **35% of all firms 'identified inadequate skills as the most important reason why they were dissatisfied with firm productivity, while 19% of firms thought it the second most important reason'** (Daniels, 2007, p. 12). This has hindered the 'high skills' strategy for economic development that South Africa has officially pursued.

Many of the new employment opportunities that do exist are in the informal sector. Dias and Posel (ibid) present figures from the 1995 October Household Survey and the 2003 Labour Force Survey, which show that the number of unskilled jobs grew by 465,760 and the number of semi-skilled jobs by 958,944 over this period. However, what is important to note from these figures is that within this growth of unskilled labour market entrants, only 31,121 went into direct employment, **whilst the rest (93%) was growth in self-employment**. The figures are similar for the semi-skilled, with just 221,596 jobs created in direct employment, whereas 77% of the employment growth was generated by self-employment (ibid). There is consequently a strong argument that new entrants to the labour market in South Africa need skills for both the formal and informal sectors.



2.2 The role of enterprise education

The aims of enterprise education

In the context of high youth unemployment, and persistent inequalities in educational outcomes, can enterprise education complement school education, and help equip a broader cross-section of learners to enter the labour market successfully? Policy makers internationally have hoped that it will do so.

Enterprise education has been defined in a variety of different ways. The majority of programmes, however, offer education that seeks to develop attitudes, personal qualities, knowledge and skills in individuals that are relevant to the start-up and management of business activities (OECD, 2009). It is thought that enterprise education can equip young learners with these attributes to improve their ability to begin their own business, as well as improving their employability and the potential for them to enter into direct employment. The OECD (2008, p. 112) states that ‘entrepreneurship education is important as a crucial determinant of the supply of entrepreneurship by forming (potential) entrepreneurs as well as contributing to a positive entrepreneurship culture. In this respect, entrepreneurship education should not only focus on narrow defined tools (e.g. how to start a business, financial and human resource management) but also [on] broader attitudes (like creativity, risk taking, etc) especially on the lower and secondary level’. They consequently argue that there should be a three-fold focus in entrepreneurship programmes:

- ‘The acquisition of key skills [e.g. literacy/numeracy, ICT etc],
- The development of personal and social skills,
- Skills relating to business start-up or financial literacy’ (OECD, 2009, p. 5).

Links with employability

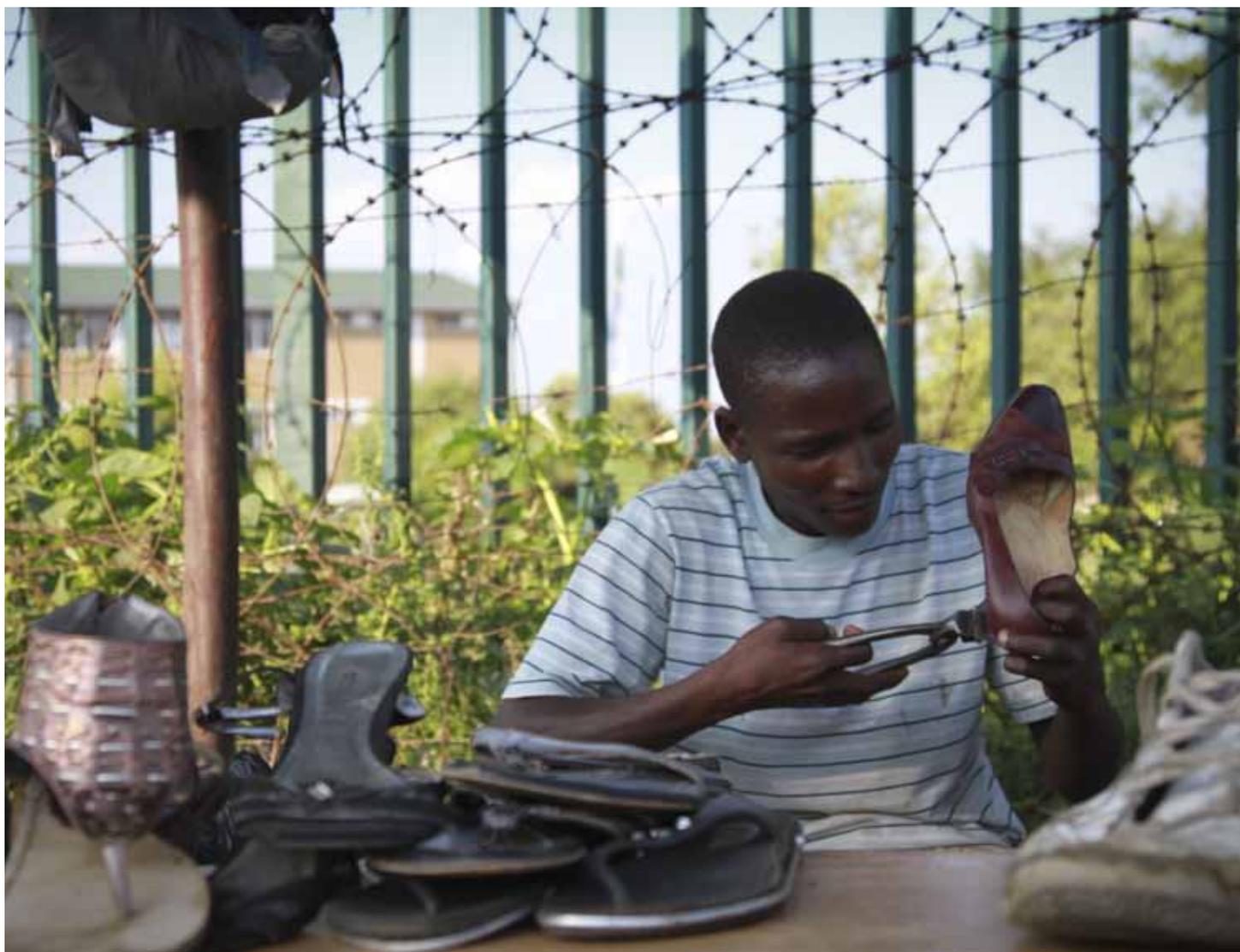
It is widely accepted that the purpose of enterprise education is not just to develop individuals that are able to start their own business, but also to improve an individual's ability to gain direct employment. Jack and Anderson (1999) emphasise that ‘[t]he anticipated outcome of enterprise training should be reflective practitioners – that is graduates who can usefully apply theory in a variety of contexts, who are equipped for an entrepreneurial career’.

In South Africa, there is evidence to suggest the mismatch between the supply of skills and the demand of industry is in part due to a lack of employability skills. A lack of work experience, particularly for those that have not been through higher education, contributes to the disconnect between what employers need and what those seeking work are able to offer (Dias & Posel, 2007). Although developing employability skills may not be the initial focus of enterprise programmes, it is an important approach to provide individuals with skills that are often lacking for those that have not been engaged in formal employment before. As Jack and Anderson (1999, p. 113) argue, ‘[t]he process of enterprise development and enterprise education is not so much the process of developing individual businesses, but the process of developing, first, people who potentially own and actually run these businesses and, second, the people who may work in these businesses’.

Does enterprise education work?

There is some evidence that enterprise education can help young people integrate into the labour market. For example, Vandenburg's (2006) discussion of the ILO's Small Enterprise Development Programme (SEED) found that unemployment of young people is lower in countries that run enterprise-based training schemes. Enterprise education is used in a variety of different contexts and is often combined with other learning objectives, such as developing

technical capacity. Evidence from a variety of sources does, however, suggest that entrepreneurship education contributes towards a variety of factors that improve the ability to initiate a small business, but also employability skills. Notably, one key aim for entrepreneurship education programmes is a changing of mindsets (OECD, 2009). Evidence suggests that it is the development of this entrepreneurial mindset which increases the propensity for an individual to initiate and pursue a new enterprise.



Freedman (2008, p. 19) does, however, note that **‘even in Kenya, where entrepreneurship education is compulsory, evidence about its effect on self-employment is not unequivocal’**. The delivery of effective enterprise training in schools is challenging, and many programmes fail to deliver the skills which support the creation of viable businesses. King and McGrath raise this issue in their book *Education in Africa* (1999, p. 216) and Grierson and McKenzie (1996) point out that self-employment is demanding, and tacking ‘enterprise’ elements onto traditional courses is usually both inefficient and ineffective. In a recent overview, Chigunta et al. (2005, p. 16) highlight that there is not yet a research basis for making sound decisions on how to support the development of enterprise skills among African youth:

Important basic questions regarding this effort remain unanswered ... If entrepreneurship has a role to play in alleviating the youth unemployment problem in Africa, what should the governments do to promote entrepreneurship? Are formal education institutions in Africa being assigned impractical and unfeasible tasks?

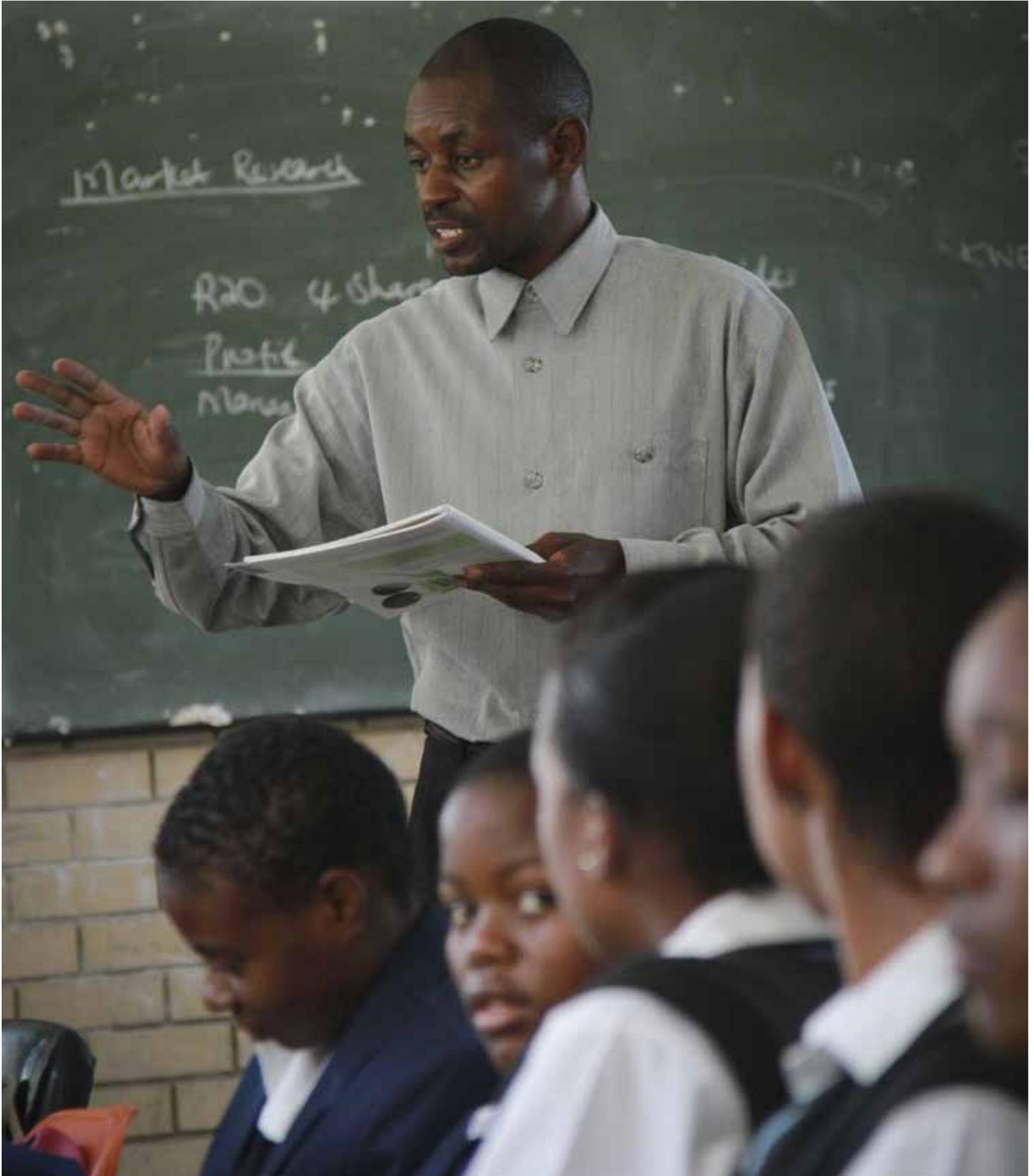
It has become increasingly clear that enterprise education programmes need to be adapted to the context in which they are to run, and cannot simply be rolled out to different locations, particularly as curricula often include social and attitudinal changes. There is a need for programmes to be localised, to ensure that these issues take account of differences in learners’ perspectives. For training to be effective it absolutely must be linked to the needs of the local labour market, and market opportunities.

The ILO (2005) indicates that it also needs to be flexible and broad-based enough for learners to be able to react to changing environments and markets.

There is also clear evidence that enterprise education alone is not enough to generate successful entrepreneurs, even where it is successfully run. It must sit alongside a wider economic development programme which improves the context within which micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) are able to operate, and promotes economic growth. Freedman (2008, p. 20) discussing Schoof (2006) outlines that enterprise education needs to be embedded with changes in four other crucial external factors to be truly effective:

- Social and cultural values, beliefs and behaviours that restrain youth entrepreneurship,
- Access to start-up finance,
- Administrative and regulatory burdens,
- Business assistance and support and business development services.

However, more evidence on the effectiveness of different approaches to teaching enterprise education is urgently needed in the South African context (as it is internationally) to identify the impact and effectiveness of different approaches.



3

Methodology

3.1 Overview of the JASA Entrepreneurship Academy programme

The Entrepreneurship Academy is an eight-month programme which synthesises many different aspects of JASA's other shorter units, currently running in a variety of locations throughout South Africa. The Academy programme aims to offer a more comprehensive enterprise programme for young people. The programme has just finished its first year of operations in eight schools across the country. The first year was a pilot, with an expectation that the programme would be scaled up to a greater number of JASA schools upon successful completion. Although JASA ran the programme independently, investment was provided from Investec, a major South African investment bank.

The course was initially intended to be delivered for four hours on a Saturday, although this was changed to run after school for three hours. The programme was open to grade 11 learners (usually 16-17 year olds) who had to opt to enter onto the programme and demonstrate that they had the commitment and drive to maintain their engagement for the full eight months, although there was no formal assessment of individuals' abilities prior to entering onto the programme. This was primarily because the curriculum was designed to be challenging and attendance at the course required a substantial time commitment, on top of their normal school commitments. The programme was run in situ at the school by either JASA representatives or school teachers.



The course began with enterprise theory to provide a foundation of the issues associated with beginning and maintaining an enterprise. The learners then researched and started their own mini-enterprise to put the theoretical aspects into practice, with each learner having a defined role which they were nominated for within the enterprise. Once the chosen product had gone to market and a defined sales period had passed, the learners then had to liquidate the company and assess success.

3.2 Purpose of evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was two-fold. First, it was designed to help JASA improve the programme for future years by showing what aspects of the programme were working particularly well, and what aspects required improvement. It also looked at how the programme impact varied between schools, particularly to identify any rural/urban differences. An internal report was therefore produced and shared with JASA to provide feedback on the impact of the pilot and potential options to develop the programme in the future.

Second, the evaluation was intended to provide transferable evidence on whether the approach and curriculum developed by JASA is working and what can be learnt from the programme for other organisations engaged in enterprise education. Increasingly, enterprise education is being utilised as a way of providing individuals with the capacity to move into self-employment, as well as improving prospects for direct entry into jobs. The scope and structure of courses are, however, highly diverse, as is the impact. Learning lessons from existing programmes is an important way of improving the impact and relevance

of enterprise education on a wider scale and it is these issues which this report aims to provide insight and evidence on. For example, although the JASA project focuses on school-age learners and employed a specific approach, the lessons in this report are likely to be more widely applicable, as it focuses primarily on the process of developing essential entrepreneurship skills.

3.3 Scope of the evaluation

JASA states that the motivation behind the Entrepreneurship Academy was to:

- provide a comprehensive enterprise programme to high school learners in grade 11 to increase employability and/or the entrepreneurial activity of young people
- train local community members and educators to facilitate the programme, thus empowering them to provide for their own communities
- encourage graduates of the programme to act as facilitators on future programmes as well as mentors for current learners
- engage local businesses in the development of the curriculum
- engage larger corporate organisations in the development of sector-specific programmes to improve the employability of graduates.

In terms of the enterprise programme itself, the aims of JASA are common aims of enterprise development programmes. First, JASA attempts to increase the likelihood of participants beginning their own enterprise in the future. Second, it aims to develop attitudes and abilities which will enable participants to run these businesses more successfully. Finally,

JASA acknowledges that the development of these attitudes and abilities is also valuable to potential employers, and therefore also seeks to help learners understand how they could use these skills to find employment.

In evaluating the impact and success of the Entrepreneurship Academy we focused exclusively on identifying success in terms of the changes initiated in the learners, as well as evaluating the structure of the course. The points noted above, around engagement with the local community, were not included as part of the evaluation.

Successful delivery of the programme would foster and equip learners with particular skills and attributes and we therefore assessed the extent to which learners felt changes had occurred in these skills and attributes. The changes were assessed retrospectively, as the course was close to completion, and it should be noted therefore that the survey relies on learners' memories of their competencies before the start of the course. This could create some bias, particularly in learners' reporting of their understanding prior to starting the programme. This was, however, unavoidable and did ensure that learners had an understanding of key issues and terms when responding.

It was important to understand how the programme has impacted not just on technical skills but also on social and cognitive characteristics. Confidence, for example, is an important attribute: confidence to initiate a business idea, confidence to seek financial assistance and confidence to approach others in a business environment. These were all skills that were targeted through the Entrepreneurship Academy programme,

and the extent to which JASA was able to encourage these characteristics in learners is an important factor in determining the success of the programme.

In addition to determining the extent to which the programme had initiated changes in learners and why these changes had occurred we also wanted to understand within what context these changes were most effectively developed. This was primarily by examining the delivery of the programme in different contexts, including both rural and urban schools. This was important because of differing expectations and exposure to commerce within the distinct contexts, and the potential impact that this may have on the delivery and relevance of the programme.

3.4 Evaluation approach

The research surveyed 69 of the 317 learners that took part in the Entrepreneurship Academy in its pilot year, across three different schools in different communities. Two schools were located in townships in the city of Johannesburg, and one in Hlau Hlau, a rural area in Mpumalanga. All of the schools were located in predominantly black communities.

Each student filled out a questionnaire which captured basic information such as gender, age and location. The main focus of the questionnaire was sets of indicators designed to measure changes in learners' propensity to start their own business, skills and knowledge relating to enterprise, and employability. These are all captured from the perspective of the learner which is important when assessing personal changes and development rather than solely technical skills uptake.



The questionnaires were supplemented with focus groups, where the learners' perspectives were explored in greater detail. They had the opportunity to discuss how they felt they had changed over the course of the programme, and how and whether the Entrepreneurship Academy initiated these changes. We also interviewed the trainers to triangulate their perceptions with the data gathered from the learners.

This report presents the theoretical framework which informed the evaluation, and then discusses the findings with regards to:

- › the structure of the course, the course materials and course facilitation
- › the changes learners reported in their propensity to start their own business, their skills and knowledge relating to enterprise, and their employability.

It compares results across the schools, draws conclusions about the effectiveness of the programme, and provides lessons learnt and recommendations which may be relevant to other organisations engaged in enterprise and entrepreneurship education.

3.5 Sample size and basic sample information

69 learners completed the questionnaires across the three schools, which accounted for 22% of all the learners who took part in the Entrepreneurship Academy in its first year. We held focus groups with 40 of these 69 learners, again across the three schools, to investigate the issues raised in the questionnaires in greater depth. As Figure 1 shows, a greater proportion of girls were surveyed, which reflected the overall composition of the JASA classes. There were also more girls than boys in the

focus groups, although an effort was made to encourage a greater number of male participants.

Figure 1 - Gender breakdown of survey participants

	Urban school 1	Urban school 2	Rural school
Male	10	9	5
Female	13	11	20
Details not provided	0	1	0

All of the respondents, for both the survey and the focus groups, had completed the course and the vast majority surveyed (94.1%) had attended most or nearly all of the lessons. Those that were absent for more than three of the lessons were excluded from the programme and therefore were not included in the evaluation. The learners surveyed were therefore the ones that had the motivation and commitment to persevere and successfully complete the course, and can be expected to be more positive than those that had dropped out over the course of the programme. The findings therefore reflect the impact of the programme on those who attended regularly and completed, rather than its effect on the whole group it intended to reach.

4

Learners' perceptions of the programme

4.1 The structure of the course, the course materials and course facilitation

The academy was planned to run over an eight-month period, after school once a week for three hours. The length of the programme was based on the need for integration between initial teaching of the theory, the practical aspects of beginning and running a mini-enterprise and an assessment of the success of the mini-enterprise upon liquidation.

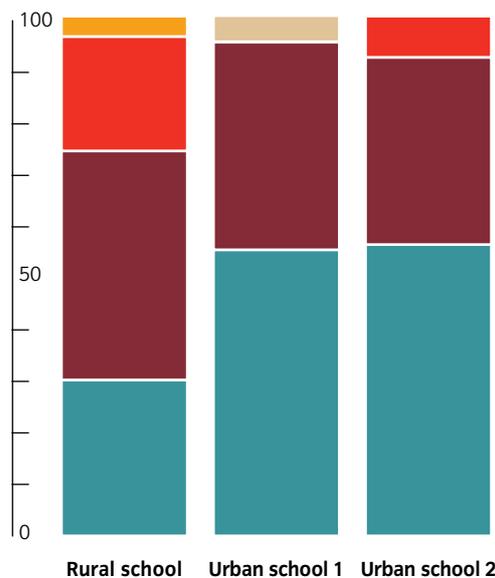
Clarity of aims

One of the primary factors in developing a successful training programme is ensuring that it meets the expectations of participants. Learners had met with JASA representatives prior to signing up for the course and the majority highlighted that the programme matched the information they were provided with at the outset. Across the three schools, 87% of learners either agreed or strongly agreed that they understood what was required of them by the course, and only 3.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed (Figure 2).

Level of challenge

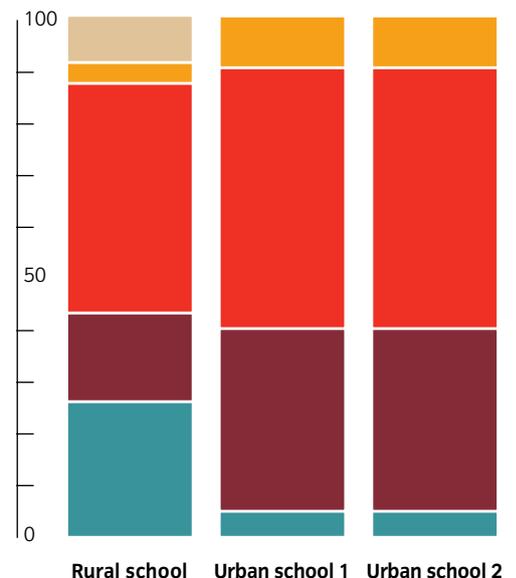
Nearly half of learners (48%) across the three schools felt the course was pitched at the right level (Figure 3).

Figure 2: I understood what was required of me by the course



- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Figure 3: The level of difficulty of the course was right



- Far Too Easy
- Too Easy
- Just Right
- Too Difficult
- Far Too Difficult

Across each school, however, at least 40% of respondents felt the course was too difficult. This figure would most likely have been higher if we had surveyed learners who had dropped out as well.

Figure 3 also shows that there were differences between the schools, with the rural school having a greater proportion of learners who felt that the course was far too difficult (26.1%). This could be because of lower matriculation expectations in the school, which is located in quite a marginalised area in comparison to the two urban schools and therefore had lower skill levels within the class. It could also be a reflection of the facilitators' capacity to demonstrate the course components, as the facilitator in the rural school was new to the material.

During the focus group discussions, the learners generally highlighted the theoretical issues as being the most difficult to understand. It is worth noting that the programme was structured to begin primarily with theory which may have put off some learners who would otherwise have been able to complete the programme. Ensuring that these theoretical issues can be demonstrated through the practical elements of the programme was important for learners to understand the relevance and impact of each component.

The facilitators emphasised that the programme was intended to be challenging:

The whole idea is not to be at their level but to take them to another level. Some to be honest fall off the boat; they are not up to the challenge. Some require extra attention. Some have passion but can't express themselves, but we help them.

Facilitator

Nevertheless, with the tight time constraints of the programme, ensuring that course content is manageable is important to ensure that learners retain interest and truly feel they are achieving in the programme. One approach could be to assess the abilities of the participants prior to initiating the course. This could potentially reduce the large number of dropouts, in that the programme could be better targeted at the different abilities within the groups, but would also ensure that those that do enter onto the course have the ability and commitment to complete it.

The particular issues that learners struggled with or benefited from most are discussed in Section 5.

Timing and length of the programme

It was clear that the three-hour length of the classes was challenging for the learners, as well as the facilitators, particularly in the initial stages when the class size was bigger. Trainers mentioned that they had difficulty motivating learners when they had already done a full school day, and that it was difficult to ensure that they remained attentive throughout the session. The duration of classes also meant that learners had difficulty fitting the JASA programme around their school work. These issues resulted in all three schools changing the balance between the time spent on theoretical and practical work, with facilitators and learners expressing a clear preference for practical learning. Each school also struggled to maintain the full three hours for each session, particularly in winter where learners needed to be home before it was dark. Facilitators' comments reflected this:

We found it was too academic so we made changes. The revised approach is learner-inclusive, interactive. Every session engages the learners to some activity.

Facilitator

Sessions were supposed to be three hours, but it's dropped off. Twenty kids every time, a lot were removed as three misses and you were gone. The first three sessions were long, that deterred a lot of the kids. I shortened it up, [in the end there were] typically 20 learners and they were pretty committed.

Facilitator

[Learners had a] 15-minute break after school, then they started. A three-hour session which I thought was too long. [The facilitator] then decided to break it down into two shorter afternoon sessions which he felt was better.

Manager

One of the schools was unable to begin the programme on time, which meant that it could not complete the course within the school year and therefore had to suspend the programme until the following year. This had a big impact on the learners who were then studying for their Year 12 exams and had to combine this with the JASA programme, which learners and facilitators indicated was difficult.

[We] started with 52, now [we have] 38. Last year they were grade 11, but now grade 12 so [we have] some [additional] dropouts.

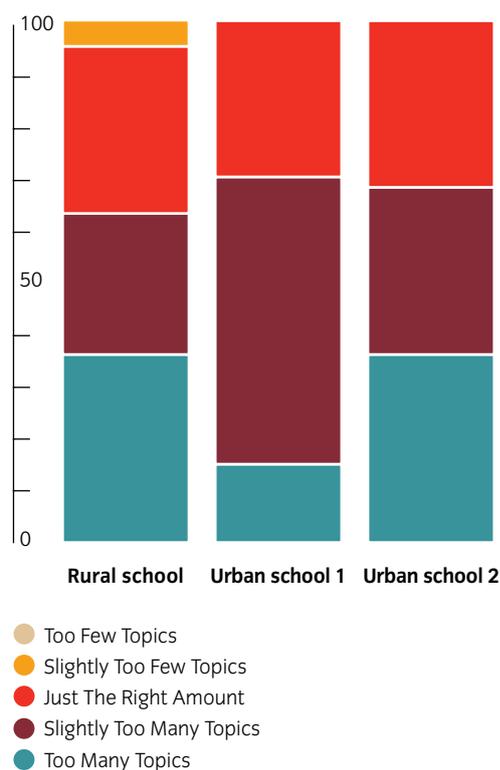
Facilitator

They told us it would last six months, but it was longer. That was unfair.

Learner focus group

These issues clearly affected learners' perceptions of the amount of material which was covered over the duration of the course. As Figure 4 highlights, an average of 67% of learners in all three of the schools felt there was too much information covered, which may have contributed to the perceived level of difficulty of the course.

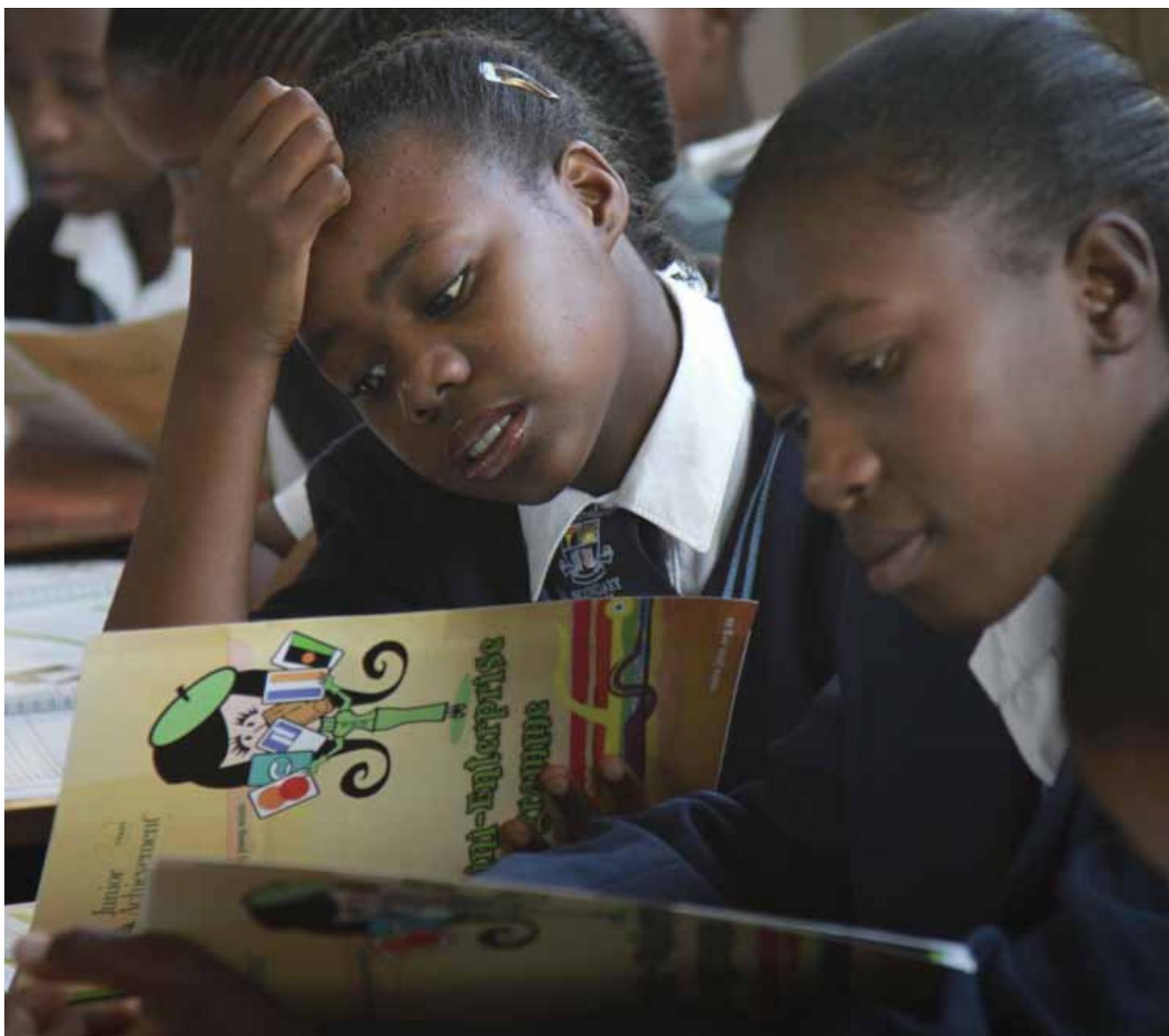
Figure 4: The course covered the right amount of material



Although the programme is planned to be pitched at a challenging level, the learners clearly needed more help to deal with the volume of the work.

Future programmes may benefit from:

- › assessing the capacities of learners prior to them entering onto the course
- › ensuring that programmes are designed to cover issues in sufficient depth. This may involve narrowing the focus of the curriculum
- › integrating practical learning throughout all components of the programme. This may be of particular benefit at the start of a programme when the applicability of the theory may not be immediately evident.

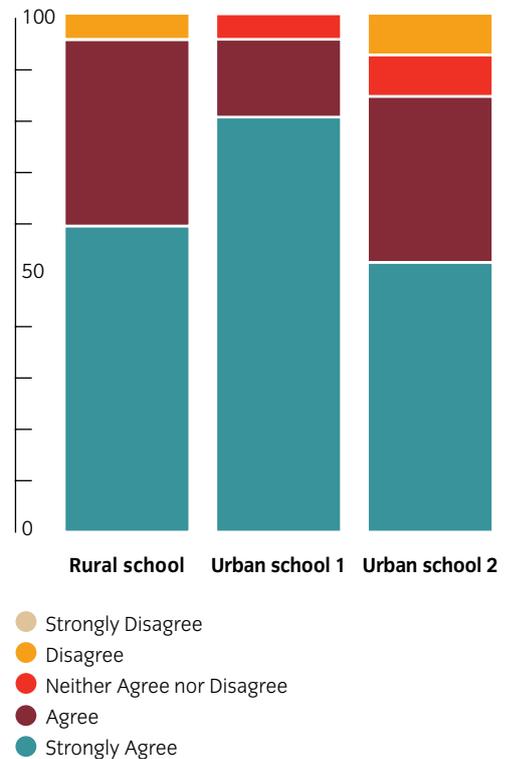


4.2 Learning support

Facilitators

The focus groups clearly showed that the facilitator's ability to ensure the material in the course is interesting and engaging is of utmost importance to ensure learners remain engaged and continue to attend, considering the length and timing of the programme. The questionnaires showed that the facilitators were, in general, perceived as effective, with 63% of learners across the three schools strongly agreeing that the facilitators were encouraging and helpful, as Figure 5 shows. This was also clearly supported during the focus groups. The facilitators' role as mentor and motivator cannot be overestimated and without this motivation outside of the classroom, as well as in it, a greater number of learners would have dropped out of the course. This reinforces the importance of preparing facilitators to be able to effectively manage both the course content and the classroom and is something that other programmes must invest resources and time into, to effectively prepare facilitators/trainers.

Figure 5: The facilitators were encouraging and helpful



The programme was particularly challenging for a new facilitator who didn't have previous experience teaching any of the material. The facilitator emphasised that lack of support materials was a constraint on them being able to keep the lessons interesting. Examples of effective practice, or, potentially, lesson plans or videos available for download, would have assisted them to deliver the materials in a more engaging way:

Q: *Do you think there is anything missing in the programme?*

Interviewer

A: *The support for me as I was new.*

Manager



We had a demonstration of a production on how to make a coffee. That was one lesson that went really well, I wish I had more of that stuff from JASA... giving different ways of teaching the material.

Facilitator

Additional support materials will become even more important when the programme is scaled up to more schools, particularly to ensure that the burden on JASA to co-ordinate and manage the programme effectively does not become unmanageable.

One mini-enterprise project group failed with their enterprise because after conducting their market research they settled on a product that was not viable. They had to abandon the project and begin again. Programme time constraints then meant they rushed through the business set-up process, including market research for their new product, in order to complete on time. The facilitator from the school felt that this failure was a result of their own lack of experience in the initial stages which meant they weren't able to advise learners on where to focus attention.

Yes, we didn't have the time for all the brainstorming and market research etc. Children did market research on gravestones which eventually we realised weren't suitable and so had to change up in the middle of the programme. And [the facilitator] didn't want to stop them in their creative flow if they wanted to change something as they aren't used to experiencing this.

Manager



With more experienced support and guidance on what a successful micro-enterprise might look like, or additional training for facilitators, this issue might have been mitigated. An example of the type of supporting materials cited as a useful tool by one of the more experienced facilitators was a book detailing successful South African entrepreneurs that he discussed with the learners. Some of the facilitators also thought that the materials could be 'South African-ised' to help the learners relate better to the issues raised and examples provided.

Language of instruction

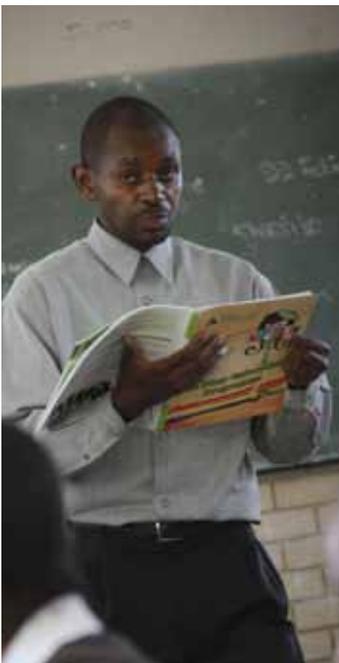
The programme was designed to be conducted in English and this did present a challenge to some of the learners. Because the business language in South Africa is English, JASA was not prepared to translate materials as learners would be expected to discuss the concepts learnt in English when the programme was completed. Facilitators from all three of the schools did, however, identify this as a real challenge, particularly when trying to discuss some of the more technical programme components:

The challenge was obviously the language, we tried to utilise English as a medium of communication. Because we are training business people and English is the major business language. Some of them, including the teachers, use Vernac. The Peace Corps (who provide some facilitators in the school) asked if we would translate, I said no because we are looking at these learners participating globally.

Facilitator

No, some they don't understand [of the programme content]. I have to translate [this information] into their language.

Facilitator



Although it is a difficult balancing act – ensuring that the information is both accessible and applicable – taking the language of instruction into account is essential in ensuring that the programme is understood and relevant to the learners.

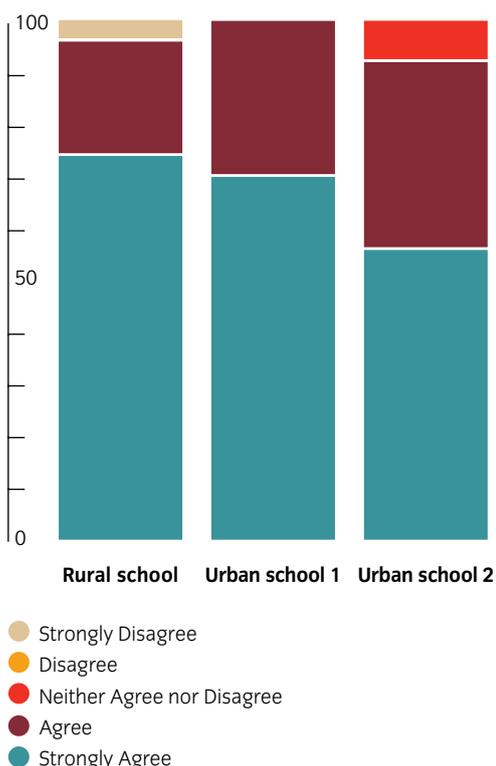
Future programmes may benefit from:

- ensuring that facilitators are well trained prior to initiating the programme and ensuring that they have access to relevant support materials, particularly to demonstrate some of the more challenging theoretical issues. One possibility for this would be developing a centralised hub for effective lesson plans and innovative approaches to delivering classes, to which facilitators could also contribute
- ensuring that materials are contextualised to the local environment, particularly taking into account the most effective language of instruction. This may be different across locations and a systematic approach is necessary to identify what is most effective in different locations.

4.3 Programme components

Figure 6 demonstrates strongly that learners were engaged by, and interested in, the programme, with 67% across the three schools strongly agreeing that they found the programme interesting. In the focus groups, learners discussed the benefits, both in terms of the technical enterprise skills but also in developing soft and employability skills.

Figure 6: On the whole, I found the programme interesting



One of the facilitators emphasised this point, highlighting that one of the key changes was that learners developed a positive attitude:

The positivity, the hope that they can do it. Looking forward to starting the reality of business.

Facilitator

The strength of changes before and after the programme in the learners will be discussed in Section 5.

Work experience

A few learners had opportunities to use JASA's business links to gain work experience placements but these were not included as part of the course and therefore were only possible for a few conscientious learners. Those that did have opportunities to attend found the experience gave them a good insight into the world of work. An external visit to a business was a scheduled part of the programme for all of the schools, but at the time of the evaluation only one of the schools had been on a visit due to planning issues. The learners that had not been able to go expressed their disappointment at not attending, although JASA were planning for the students to go the following year. Although the visits are a financial and communication burden there were clear benefits in allowing the learners to see a real business environment and view the production process, which respondents from the school that attended found inspirational. Facilitators also emphasised that visits would provide support for the theoretical components they teach.

Organisations could consider developing a network of businesses willing to conduct site visits and possibly offer work experience placements. This would provide the exposure to business that the learners seek, and, it would seem, assist in developing the aspirations of learners. This may also enhance local participation and community engagement in programmes.



The role of guest speakers

The number and type of guest speakers was different across the three schools. Often speakers were local business owners who would discuss the operations and issues they encountered whilst in business. Learners clearly found them to be an important addition as Figures 7 and 8 indicate below, with an average of 83% of respondents indicating that they inspired them to start their own business and 90% over the three schools indicating that they inspired them to enter directly into a job. It is interesting to note that more of the learners were inspired to enter into a job rather than self-employment. This was also evident from the focus groups, in which many of the learners highlighted their improved understanding of the risks and challenges associated with starting a new business and that this had made them reassess their own plans.

Figure 7: The guest speakers inspired me to start my own business

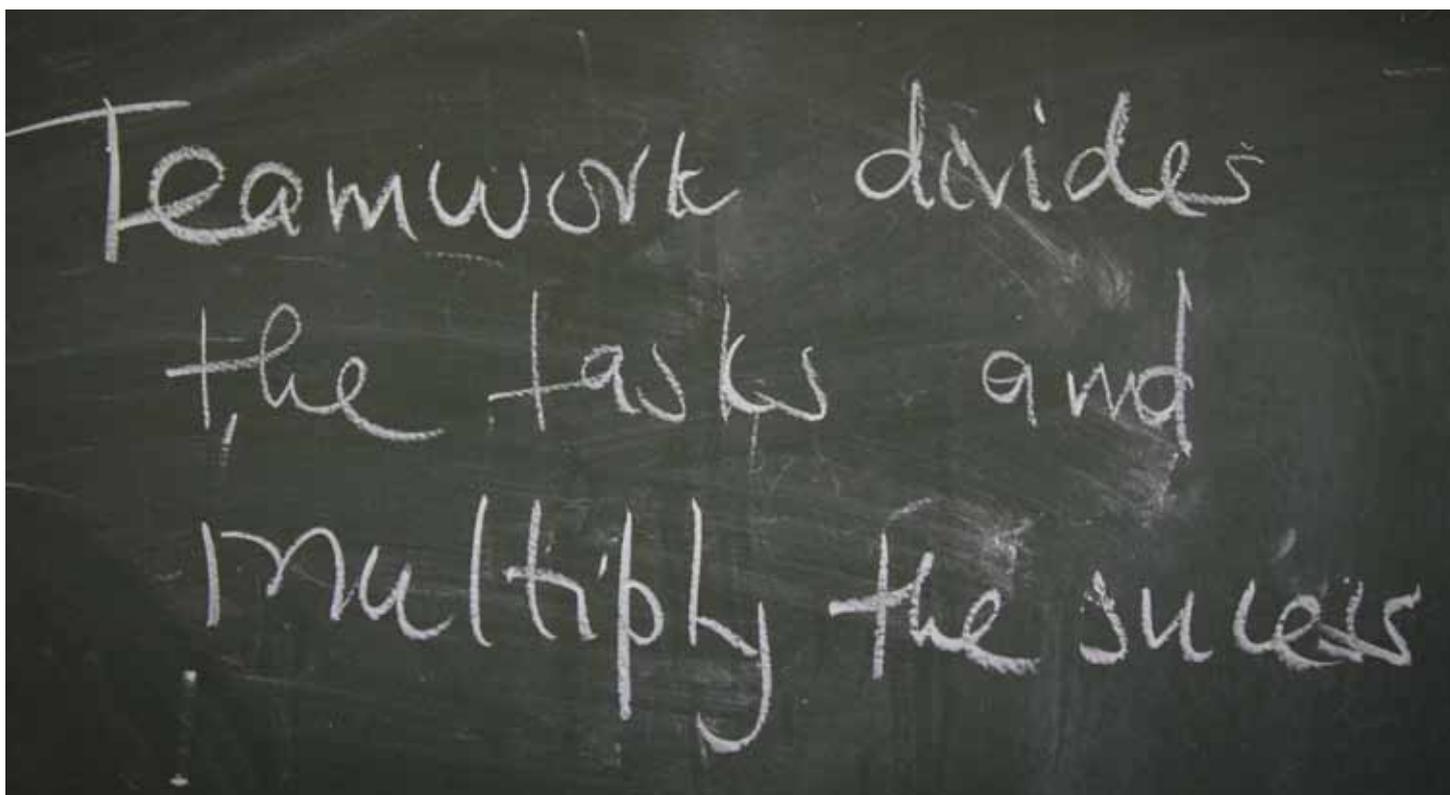
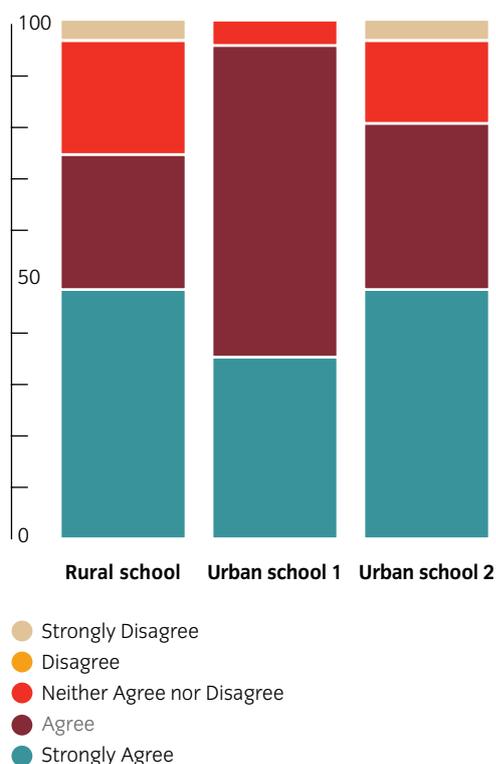
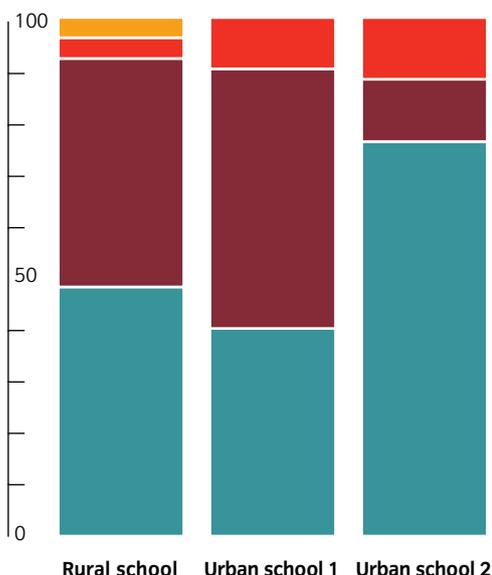


Figure 8: The guest speakers inspired me to prepare for a career



- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

In addition, the data indicates that in the one school in which the role of guest speakers was well integrated, the impact on the learners was the greatest, indicating that developing a more structured approach to this could be of benefit to the overall programme.

The speakers provided a better understanding of the realities of business, as one of the focus groups indicated:

We have learned [from the speakers] that it's best to start small and grow big, be patient, positive thinking.

Learner focus group

[The guest speakers] taught that you have to know, you have to have knowledge, know competitors, market research ... You [also] have to make your product attractive.

Learner focus group

The speakers played an effective role in illuminating some of the theoretical issues discussed in lessons. In addition, for new entrepreneurs the development of networks is a key issue in supporting the initial development of an enterprise. The speakers provided a potential avenue for the learners to begin to develop a network within the business world. However, none of the learners retained an ongoing relationship with the speakers or had links to wider business networks. Such networks could help support learners upon completion and potentially provide them with a mentor as they look to start their own new businesses, move into jobs or study further upon completion of high school. Learners also indicated that they were keen to meet with learners from other JASA schools to share ideas and issues that others in their position had encountered.

That [meeting with other JASA learners] would be an exchange programme, would spark inspiration and motivation. It is possible but needs a budget.

Facilitator

[I] could meet someone with the same dream as mine, we can talk about it.

Learner focus group

Future projects may benefit from:

- developing a network of businesses willing to conduct site visits and potentially work experience placements for learners
- initiating opportunities for learners to develop their own business networks.

5

The impact of the JASA programme on competency development in learners

As outlined in the evaluation framework, the Entrepreneurship Academy programme has three primary aims:

- 1 First, it aims to increase the likelihood of participants beginning their own enterprise in the future.
- 2 Second, it aims to develop attitudes and abilities which will enable participants to run these businesses successfully.
- 3 Finally, it acknowledges that these attitudes and abilities are also valuable to employers, and therefore also seeks to help participants understand how they could use these skills to find employment.

The sections that follow assess, through the eyes of the learners, how the JASA programme addressed each of these aims, and the extent to which the programme had the intended impact in terms of developing entrepreneurial competencies in them.

5.1 Aim 1: Increased propensity to become entrepreneurial

The Entrepreneurship Academy aimed to make it more likely that learners will become entrepreneurs in the future. There may be a long delay between participation in the programme and initiating a business, however, and this is likely to vary substantially from

participant to participant. The decision to begin a business is also likely to be strongly influenced by events and experiences that occur after the programme (for example gaining access to capital or losing a job). Both these factors make it difficult to directly measure the impact of enterprise programmes on entrepreneurial behaviour.⁵

As an alternative, learners' intentions to begin an enterprise at the end of the programme as a proxy for beginning a business were measured. Research on planned behaviour from the psychology literature indicates that an individual's intention to behave in a certain way is the best predictor of whether or not they will do so (Ajzen & Albarracín, 2007, p. 413; Souitaris et al., 2007, p. 568). The intention to become an entrepreneur can therefore be used as a good proxy for the likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur.⁶

The most commonly used framework for understanding how intentions are formed is the theory of planned behaviour developed by Ajzen (1991). According to this theory, intentions are shaped both by how desirable the behaviour is seen to be, personally and socially, and also by the extent to which the individual thinks the behaviour is feasible.

We therefore assessed the impact of the JASA programme on the basis of the extent to which it affected these factors in learners.

⁵ Directly measuring the extent to which the programme has increased the likelihood of individuals beginning their own businesses could be done by following the group over time, and comparing outcomes with a similar group who did not participate in the programme.

⁶ Entrepreneurial behaviour, including initiating and running an enterprise, seems quite clearly to be planned behaviour, rather than a reflexive reaction to a stimulus (Krueger et al., 2000, p. 413). Although an individual may have strong incentives to become self-employed (including losing a job or failing to find one), they must still decide on a plan of action and choose to follow it in order to begin a business

Personal desirability of entrepreneurship

In order to test the effectiveness of the programme in raising perceptions of personal desirability of entrepreneurship, we asked participants to indicate how they valued two sets of attributes, one typically linked with entrepreneurialism, the other with seeking a job (Oosterbeek et al., 2008). We did not attempt to assess how this changed during the course, because we felt that a post-hoc assessment of character traits which are known to be slow-changing would not give valid results. Future assessments could benefit from evaluating this before and after participation in the programme.

An individual's attitude towards entrepreneurship is likely to significantly affect whether or not they form an intention to start a business. The more positive an individual's expectations and beliefs about starting a business, the more likely they are to intend to become an entrepreneur (Krueger et al., 2000, p. 417). These attitudes are affected by many things, including family, educational environments and profession (Fayolle et al., 2006).

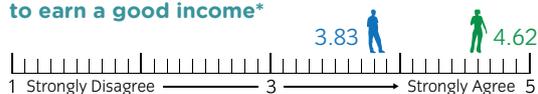
Entrepreneurship programmes which foster awareness of the challenges and benefits of starting a business often explicitly aim to change how personally desirable entrepreneurship seems to participants. Running a programme which aimed to foster awareness of the challenges and benefits of starting a business, JASA explicitly aimed to change how personally desirable entrepreneurship is viewed by participants through:

- highlighting the potential financial and professional benefits of entrepreneurship, including things such as the opportunity to be one's own boss, to be involved in all aspects of a business, and to earn a good income
- identifying and discussing successful entrepreneurs
- providing motivational speakers who highlight the advantages and solutions to challenges of entrepreneurship.

It also actively sought to raise learners' awareness of the possible pitfalls and risks of starting a business, which could reduce the perceived desirability, but is important in assessing the potential for success. The effectiveness of the programme in changing learners' perceptions about entrepreneurship has been evaluated with this in mind.

We asked learners to indicate the extent to which they thought entrepreneurial activity led to a good income and interesting work before and after taking the course, in an attempt to assess more directly whether the programme had led to changes in how financially desirable entrepreneurship was seen to be. We found that, across the three schools, learners felt significantly more positive about the **financial prospects of entrepreneurship** after completing the course (a mean response of 4.62 after the course, compared to 3.83 before the course).

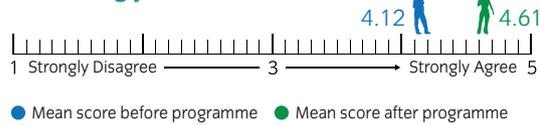
Figure 9: Owning your own business allows you to earn a good income*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 10: Owning your own business is an interesting job



Whether the course improved participants' perceptions of **how interesting it was to be an entrepreneur** was less clear as there was no significant difference between the means before and after the courses (Figure 10).

The responses from the focus groups also showed differences in the way learners responded to the course. At the rural school, about half the group wanted to be self-employed and half wanted to be employed in a firm. For those that wanted to be self-employed the motivations emphasised were:

Working with people, being your own boss, managing and keeping the profit, managing your own time.

Learner Focus Group



Perceived acceptability of starting your own business

Individuals' choices are also affected by how they think important people in their lives perceive the options from which they are choosing. The theory of planned behaviour predicts that individuals who think those close to them are positive about entrepreneurship as a career direction will be more likely to intend to become an entrepreneur (Ajzen, 1991).

Enterprise education programmes can affect perceived social norms by raising awareness in the wider community of the advantages of entrepreneurship.

The JASA programme exposed learners to successful entrepreneurs in their communities as well as big businesses which valued entrepreneurial behaviour. Both of these potentially influence what learners thought about social attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Additionally, the programme operated within learners' schools, so that, in most cases, their peers and friends became more aware of entrepreneurship as a career option.

To assess the impact of this dimension of the programme, we asked learners to indicate how positive they thought people close to them were about entrepreneurship as a career choice, both before and after the programme. This measures participant perceptions of social norms, which is what matters in terms of forming intentions.

We found that learners were significantly more likely to agree that those who were most important to them, including closest family and friends, thought that they should become self-employed after the course. Additionally, the responses in the focus groups indicated that participation

in the programme had often positively altered the attitudes of learners' families towards entrepreneurship. One learner for example indicated:

At first, our families didn't support us but since we have done the small business this has changed, as they can see the profit we can make and want us to do it.

Learner focus group

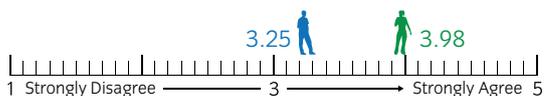
Figure 11: The people who are most important to me think that I should become self-employed*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 12: My closest family think that I should become self-employed*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 13: My closest friends think that I should become self-employed*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Perceived feasibility of starting an enterprise

According to the theory of planned behaviour, **the perceived feasibility of beginning an enterprise is also a key predictive component** of whether an individual will form intentions to become an entrepreneur. For example, becoming a businessman with an international business might seem desirable to an individual, both from a personal and social perspective, but

if they do not think that they will be able to do it, it is unlikely that they will form an intention to pursue this career.

Feasibility assessments relate directly to individuals' perceived ability to successfully execute a specific behaviour, or their personal control over a situation, also called self-efficacy (Krueger et al., 2000, p. 418). This perception of personal control has been shown to influence the extent to which individuals are prepared to initiate and persist in behaviour with an uncertain payoff, which is essential for the opportunity recognition and risk-taking behaviours fundamental to entrepreneurship. The theory of planned behaviour suggests that individuals who are confident in their ability to begin a business are far more likely to intend to do it, all else being equal.

Enterprise education can affect perceived control over entrepreneurial behaviours by building the knowledge and skills that are required to initiate and run a successful business. In order to assess the extent to which the JASA programme had succeeded in increasing the perceived behavioural control over entrepreneurial behaviours, we asked learners to compare the ease with which they thought they would be able to undertake a variety of core activities associated with entrepreneurship before and after the programme, including finding finance, finding business-related information, finding premises and making contacts. Learners were also asked to indicate any change in their perception of the general ease of becoming self-employed.

Learners reported responses that were much more positive to the questions about how easily they would be able to undertake core entrepreneurial activities after the

course, as compared to before the course. The greatest increases in perceived behavioural control, as measured by these questions, were in learners' perceptions of their ability to find the finance, information and contacts which would enable them to become self-employed.

Figure 14: I would find it easy to make the contacts I need to start my own business*

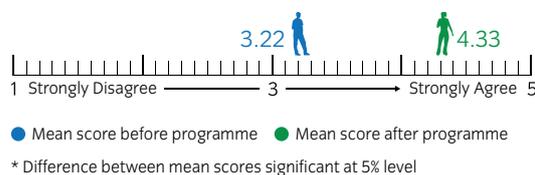


Figure 15: I would find it easy to find information I need to start my own business*

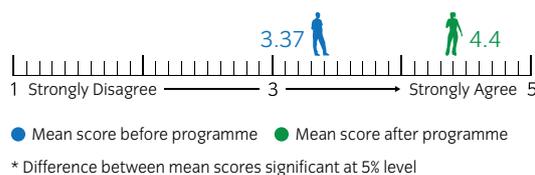
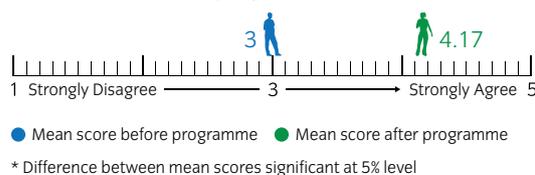


Figure 16: I would find it easy to get the finance to become self-employed*



In the focus groups, learners emphasised their improved understanding of the start-up phase of a business, particularly creating a business plan:

[The course] showed me you can't just start a business, you need a start-up phase.

Learner focus group

The funding of the business, I used to think it was a problem. Now I realise that there are more sources.

Learner focus group

It was clear that the learners understood many financial concepts but despite the positive outcomes from the survey, still viewed access to capital as a key constraint. Their responses showed both realism and awareness of the need for low-cost start-up strategies.

Even if I don't have money I can start a business, if I have a good business plan.

Learner focus group

They also underlined the value of the facilitators for giving advice about business, and identified local businesses and personal connections as sources of help:

[The facilitator] is the most important person to go to for advice about a business.

Learner focus group

[As well as the facilitator] we can also go to people with businesses, as well as family and community members.

Learner focus group

The focus groups indicated that accessing business-related information now the course has been completed was an ongoing issue, despite largely positive responses to this question in the survey. When questioned in the focus groups about how they might continue to gain support, many were not aware of support channels and generally only cited parents or siblings, and the JASA facilitator. In addition, lack of access to even the small amount of capital needed for the mini-enterprise may well have had an impact on learners' expectations of the feasibility of sourcing finance in the future and consequently the ongoing issues emphasised by many in accessing finance. Developing knowledge of how to access and engage with networks and business support when the programme

is completed is an important element in improving the ability of learners to effectively move into self-employment.

Learners were more likely to report that they had the skills that they needed to become self-employed in general (Figure 17). During the focus groups, the learners consistently expressed increased confidence in their skills to start up a business, and this generally stemmed from the lessons they had learnt whilst conducting the mini-enterprise programme:

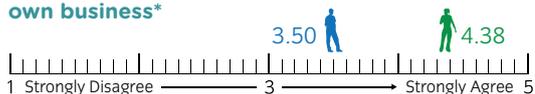
I learnt there was more to a business than making money. I feel I can start my own business if I get the opportunity.

Learner focus group

I'm now sure I can start my own business, whereas before I couldn't.

Learner focus group

Figure 17: I have the skills/capacity to start my own business*

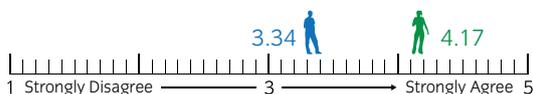


● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

The changes in learners' perceptions of their level of control over the process of beginning a business were mixed. Learners were significantly more likely to report that they thought they would have control over their work situation after the course. On the other hand, learners' perceptions of the events outside their control which could prevent them from becoming self-employed were not significantly changed after the course, and their perceptions of the chance of failure associated with starting a new business were also not significantly altered.

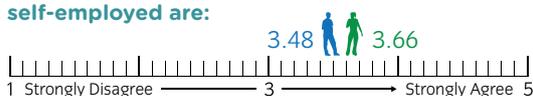
Figure 18: Being self-employed, I would have control over my work situation*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

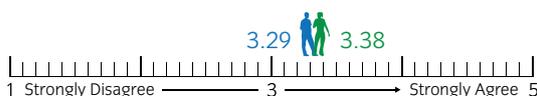
* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 19: The number of events outside my control which would prevent me from becoming self-employed are:



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

Figure 20: If I pursued a career as self-employed, I felt the chance of failure would be:



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme





During the focus groups, it was clear that the course made many of the learners more wary of the pitfalls and risks of starting their own business and that this had encouraged them to reassess their intention to begin an entrepreneurial career and instead, intend to enter into waged employment. This is something that is discussed in greater depth in the section below on feasibility. One of the facilitators emphasised this point, highlighting that this awareness was a really significant positive change:

They got to understand that starting a business is a challenge, they've learned to investigate prior to making a decision.

Facilitator

The broad spectrum of changes this initiated in learners' perspectives of career options is captured by the range of responses below. While some were clearly encouraged, others reassessed the desirability of becoming an entrepreneur after they gained a better understanding of the risks:

Before JASA I thought why should I start a business I don't have the skills. Now I feel I have them to start in the business world.

Learner focus group

I think it might be more secure in a job.

Learner focus group

I didn't know a business needed a lot of procedure to follow, that you need a plan. You need to take a risk I know that now, calculated risk.

Learner focus group

In the focus groups, learners recognised that the risks associated with starting a business were inevitable, but had developed their understanding of strategies for calculating and managing these risks and developing solutions through planning and procedures.

It's made me realise that there is a lot to be done before you start a business.

Learner focus group

We now see risk as a challenge to overcome.

Learner focus group

This range of perspectives can certainly be viewed as success, in that the programme has allowed learners to self assess and understand how the concepts and approaches they have learnt apply to their own aims and intentions. Facilitators and learners alike often **emphasised that learners did not know everything they needed to now begin an enterprise but reinforced that they had made strides in developing their understanding of enterprise issues and approaches**, and also potential assistance in shaping their future learning.

JASA was a stepping stone into future business, a first piece of knowledge.

Learner focus group

5.2 Aim 2: Be better at entrepreneurship if you do it

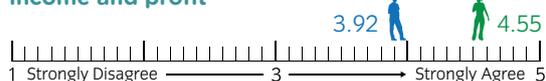
The second aim of the programme is closely linked to the first, in that individuals' self-efficacy is related to their actual skills. JASA aimed to develop learners' confidence in their abilities by teaching them knowledge and skills which are likely to be needed when setting up a business. The Entrepreneurship Academy programme explicitly teaches a set of fundamental business economics concepts and practical skills which are needed to set up a business. This knowledge is also likely to make learners more realistic about the challenges they face, so there is the possibility that they could initially decrease self-efficacy, as discussed above.

In our assessment of the effectiveness of this aspect of the programme, we asked learners to indicate whether they felt more confident about a set of capabilities commonly thought to be important for entrepreneurship after training. The intention was to measure perceived increases in specific knowledge and skills underlying general judgement of self-efficacy in entrepreneurship. The knowledge component included a measure of how much learners felt their understanding of business concepts had improved, for example, supply and demand, income and profit, and competitive advantage. The skill component included skills such as identifying customers, price setting, drawing up a budget, opening a bank account and writing a business plan.

We found that there was a significant perceived improvement in each of the knowledge components measured

upon completion of the programme. Learners reported a significant increase in their understanding of the difference between income and profit, of what gives a business a competitive advantage, and of the concept of demand:

Figure 21: I know the difference between income and profit*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

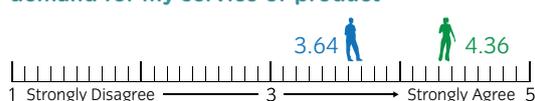
Figure 22: I understand what gives a business a competitive advantage*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

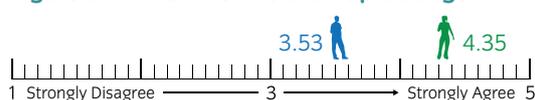
Figure 23: I can work out whether there is a demand for my service or product*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 24: I know how to draw up a budget*



● Mean score before programme ● Mean score after programme

* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Comments during the focus groups suggested that by learning the concepts in a practical setting, the learners had understood not only the theory but also why it was important in the day-to-day running of the business.

Doing the income statement taught me a lot [about] communications and the importance of it in business.

Learner focus group

They [speakers] taught us how to select prices. They taught us new terms – variable cost, fixed cost – when we were presenting our companies.

Learner focus group

Learners appeared to benefit at different levels from learning business concepts in this way. Those who were studying business economics in their normal school lessons pointed out that **being involved in a real business had helped them better understand concepts they were studying in their usual classes**, such as break-even points, and this had therefore improved their academic performance.

Some of the things we do in school, it was easy to compare them with [JASA]. It was making things easier in terms of studying. It was very beneficial.

Learner focus group

The facilitators recognised, however, that understanding some of the concepts was difficult for many of the learners. This was particularly the case for financial management.

The weakest [component understood] was break-even point, income statement[s], cash flow and the balances.

Learner focus group

This was a particular problem in the rural school, which had the lowest academic performance. The structure of the programme was important in trying to mitigate the impact of this, since it attempts to recognise the different strengths of learners, particularly in the way that the mini-enterprise programme is run, for example by encouraging individuals to utilise their individual strengths to support the wider team. It was clear, however, that learners were emerging from the programme with varied levels of financial understanding. Some felt that they had been given unimportant roles in their mini-enterprise programme group, and therefore been marginalised from the practical learning. This contributed to some learners' decision to drop out.

Learners reported improvements in their business skills as well as their knowledge about the theory of business. They reported the largest difference in their ability to draw up a budget (Figure 24), but also reported significant improvements in their abilities to identify customers, set prices and write business plans. The only competency that learners did not report a significant improvement in was knowing how to open a bank account, which had the second highest starting level of all the factors.

Figure 25: I know how to open a bank account

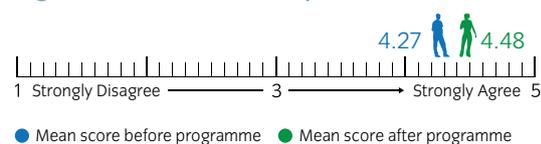
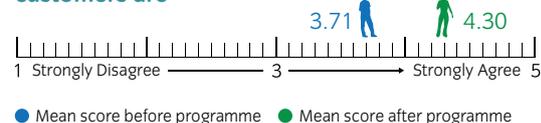


Figure 26: I can work out who potential customers are*



* Difference between mean scores significant at 5% level

Figure 27: I can work out whether there is a demand for my service or product*

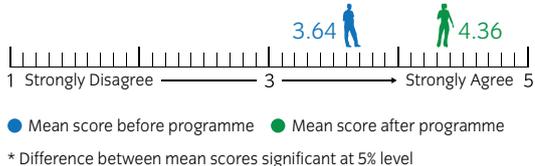
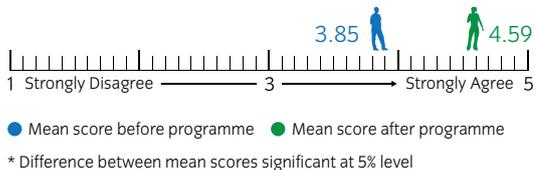


Figure 28: I understand how to set prices*



Understanding of the need and role of a business plan was particularly emphasised across the focus groups. Learners also spoke about the challenges of doing market research to identify potential customers. Some groups were able to deal with these challenges better than others. The urban schools were fairly successful in understanding the market and what would potentially sell:

Market research was extremely important – one company changed their business on the back of market research and it influenced our choices of business.

Learner focus group

At the rural school, however, this part of the programme proved difficult, and this seemed to stem from the limited exposure the learners had to markets and commerce in their local area:

It's a challenge for them to come up with products; they are not used to creative thinking. And the range of products is small. They need exposure to things so they can come up with new possibilities.

Manager



Learners' comments regarding understanding and setting prices during the focus groups suggested that they gained a more nuanced understanding of basic processes like budgeting, and that this was a new skill:

I knew there was a budget but not to what level.

Learner focus group

[It taught me] to make a profit and to budget money.

Learner focus group

Things I didn't know were the selling price, different departments in a business. The programme taught me how to be a leader and work within a team.

Learner focus group

5.3 Aim 3: Be able to use skills developed to improve employability

Much has been written about the difference between entrepreneurship and enterprise skills. Here, we accept that there is a certain set of skills required to initiate and successfully run a new business. We refer to these as entrepreneurship skills. However, many of these skills have direct application to employment as well as self-employment. The ability to recognise new opportunities to create value, work in a team, take initiative, communicate effectively, recognise competitive advantage and understand potential clients' needs all have the potential to create value for an employer. Possessing such skills should therefore make individuals more employable as well, should they wish to find a job.

Hillage and Pollard (1998) define employability as an individual's capacity to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment if required. They suggest that employability has four dimensions, each of which can be directly related to the type of enterprise training undertaken by JASA:

- Employability '**assets**' include the knowledge, skills and attitudes that an individual possesses. The skills and knowledge developed through enterprise education fall into this dimension, as do the problem-solving, opportunity-seeking attitudes that the course seeks to develop.
- The way that an individual uses their assets in a work context – their **working style and motivation** – is the second dimension of employability. Enterprise education can develop this by facilitating the development of teamwork, decision-making and initiative through business challenges.
- The third dimension of employability is an individual's presentational skills, or the **way that they present their assets to employers**. This includes their ability to write a CV, and present themselves to potential employers in interviews and other forms of interaction, such as work experience. JASA tried to help learners develop this. It helped them, in some circumstances, to understand the workplace better through work experience, the better to position themselves as valuable additions. It helped them with CV writing and interview skills.
- Employability is also affected by the **context in which work is sought**. The availability of work, and the demand for certain skills sets, affect how employable an individual is. While individuals cannot change this, understanding it could help learners take the supply and demand for skills into account when choosing further training, looking for work, and deciding whether to seek a job or start their own business. In other words, enterprise training could help individuals be more responsive to their contexts, rather than passively affected by them.

In order to test whether the JASA programme had succeeded in developing these ‘employability skills’, we asked learners to report any changes they had experienced in indicators related to the first three dimensions of employability above. One of the facilitators outlined JASA’s approach to developing employability through the programme:

It is not only theory and academic but we look at life skills so they can be a presentable person. We talk about success skills, etiquette, how to present yourself and CVs because it's about image. Entrepreneurship can not only be limited to starting your own business, but also to you being employed, helping someone else to grow their business.

Facilitator

Assets

In addition to the knowledge and skills measures discussed above, we asked learners about changes in attitudes, including taking responsibility for actions and working on their own initiative.

Learners’ responses indicated a significant improvement in indicators related to proactivity. Learners’ mean scores for accepting responsibility for their actions, working on their own initiative, thinking of creative solutions and finding the information they required to make a decision all increased significantly, with creative thinking and the ability to seek relevant information showing the biggest improvement.



Figure 29: I am likely to accept responsibility for my actions*

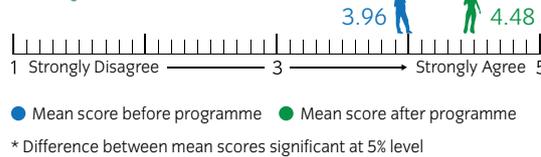


Figure 30: I am able to work on my own initiative*

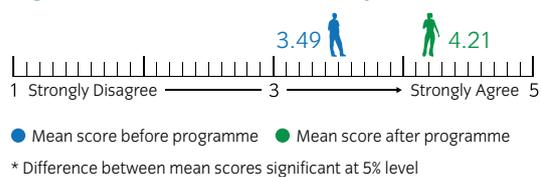


Figure 31: I am likely to think of creative solutions to problems*

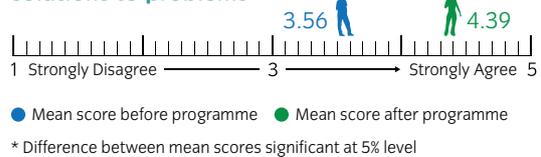
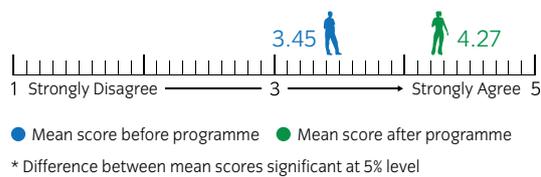


Figure 32: I am able to find the information that I need to make a decision*



In the focus groups, personal development and the cultivation of attributes such as leadership, responsibility and perseverance all emerged as very significant outcomes of the programme. Many learners emphasised the pride they took in performing an important role in their mini-enterprise company:

So many things about JASA [were good]. Experiencing how to manage your own business it was good, how to be a manager. To say I want to be a manager to do this and this, it was hard, but it was good.

Learner Focus Group

I was given the opportunity to be in a business to lead it, to be the financial manager. I was given tasks and responsibilities.

Learner Focus Group

There were, however, downsides also cited in the focus groups. As in everyday business life, not everyone can be a manager and not gaining their desired role within the business seemingly had a detrimental effect on the motivation and participation of some of the learners in the mini-enterprise. The facilitators noted they were keen to ensure that the role selection process was managed from within the groups, however, this meant that the **power and decision-making was often retained by the most dominant group members, which potentially impacted on the learning experiences of others.**

Some people were upset as they didn't have positions, where others did.

Learner Focus Group

[In] one company people didn't completely agree on issues which led to people pulling out. They didn't involve me in those issues; maybe I could have come in and given direction.

Facilitator

The learners outlined the essential role that committed, patient facilitators played in initiating change in them:

[The facilitator] taught us belief and communication.

Learner Focus Group

Most importantly he was patient.

Learner Focus Group

He encouraged us the most, to try and make us work hard.

Learner Focus Group

The facilitators also recognised these changes, which reinforced the issues and changes highlighted by the learners:

Very much [has changed in their mindset of starting a business], they have been able to [understand] competition building, [and understand] there are problems in business, because they are working practically in a business environment.

Facilitator

Yes definitely, they acquired skills [for employability]. Those 20 that persisted learned soft skills of trying to stick with a subject.

Facilitator

Using their assets

To ascertain the extent to which the programme had helped the learners use their assets productively in a business context, we asked learners about changes in their ability to solve problems, make decisions, give and receive feedback and communicate effectively.

Learners reported a significant improvement in their ability to plan and use their time effectively. They generally reported that they were better able to work to a deadline, to plan activities and set objectives that helped them to achieve a larger goal, and to prioritise their workloads.

Figure 33: I am able to set objectives that helped me achieve a larger goal*

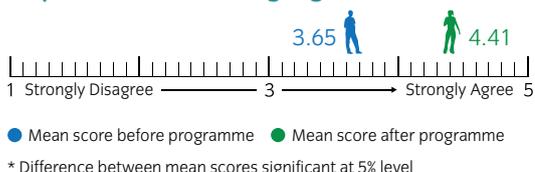


Figure 34: I am able to plan activities which helped me achieve a goal*

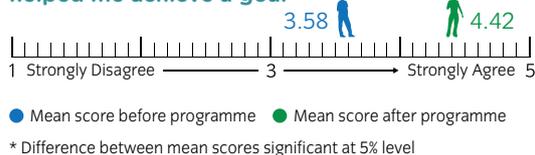


Figure 35: I am able to prioritise my workload*

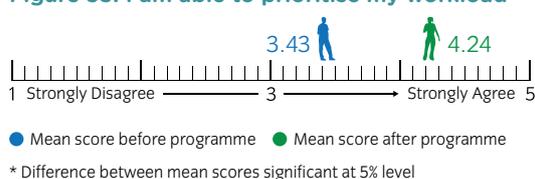
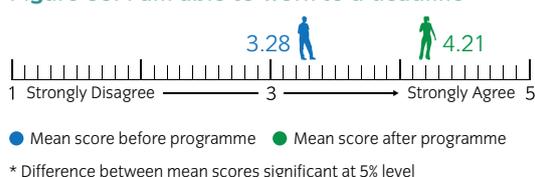


Figure 36: I am able to work to a deadline*



They also reported significant gains in their ability to communicate effectively.

In the focus groups it was clear that this wasn't just in a formal environment but also in communicating with their peers, which many learners said was one of the greatest benefits. Learners were also on average more confident about discussing work or school matters on the phone and presenting ideas to an audience after the course. Furthermore, they reported that they were better able to listen to others. Again, this was a factor that came across very clearly during discussions with the learners.

Figure 37: I am confident discussing work/school matters on the telephone*

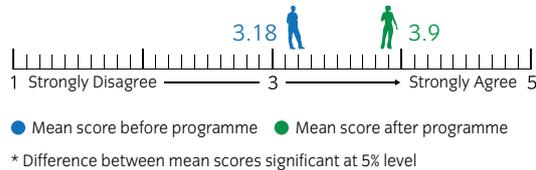


Figure 38: I am confident presenting an idea to an audience*

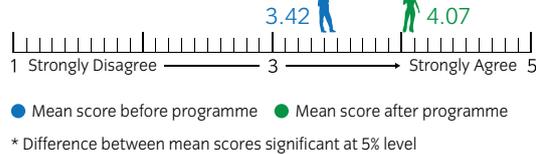
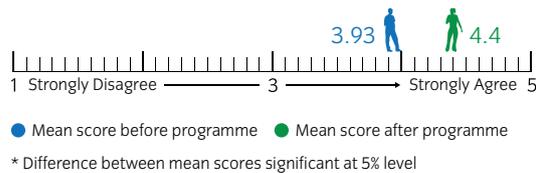


Figure 39: I am able to listen to others and understand what they were trying to say*



Learners particularly valued the opportunity to share their ideas. For many of them, being listened to respectfully was not a common experience, and many of them said that their confidence had increased since the course:

[Normally] in a class you just sit down and listen to someone, JASA change it to the opposite: to express our feelings, talk about what we wanted to do.

Learner focus group

[The programme] helped me to express my ideas.

Learner focus group

It was a support system; I was a very shy person and still am, but am now able to talk in front of people. It taught me a lot.

Learner focus group



I never talked to anyone here. It brought another side to me, [I] learned how to communicate. I learned skills, it was fun.

Learner focus group

Teamwork is often essential for making effective use of individual knowledge and skills in the workplace. The JASA learners reported that their capacity for teamwork had improved, relative to before they started the course, in three ways. They felt, on average, more able to work in a team, to negotiate with others, and to motivate others.

Figure 40: I am able to work in a team*

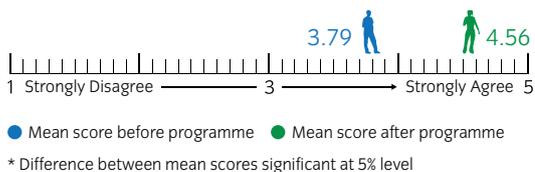


Figure 41: I am able to negotiate with others*

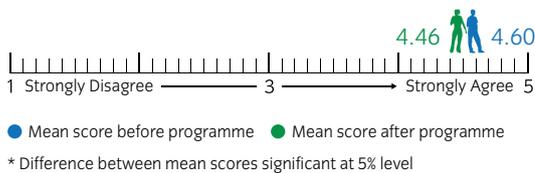
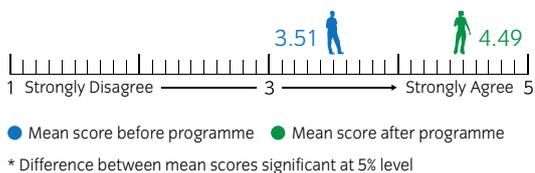


Figure 42: I am able to motivate others*



In each of the focus groups, the learners spoke of the difficulty of working together in the mini-enterprise initially, and the **steep learning curve they experienced in terms of their ability to work in a team.**

This was something they found extremely challenging but also was the skill which learners in the focus groups highlighted as one of the key changes in themselves:

[The changes were] to be patient, work with other people.

Learner focus group

I really enjoyed the ethics programme, that you must respect people and be frank with them.

Learner focus group

You have to [have] good communications, be with the shareholders. They are the most important, I have to know each and every one is OK. If we need to talk about something we need to set up a meeting to talk about it.

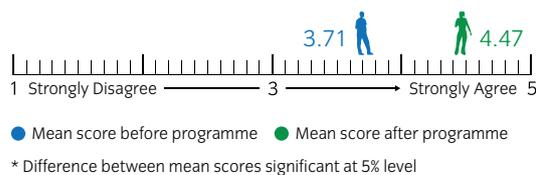
Learner focus group

Presentation

We asked learners about changes in their ability to discuss issues relating to work or school, their confidence in their ability to present themselves to others, prepare for an interview and write a CV. The learners reported significantly more confidence in their ability to present a positive image of themselves to others and felt on average more able to write a CV. They also reported particularly strong average improvements in their ability to prepare for an interview, something that many learners emphasised they had no idea about prior to the course and attracted the lowest score among the employability competencies.



Figure 43: I am confident that I can present a positive image of myself to others*

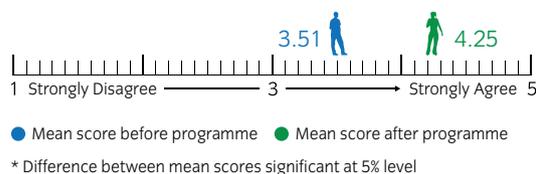


Their comments in the focus groups reflected this:

The Interview part [of the programme helped me], I didn't know what to answer when I went to an interview, [and] how to present yourself.

Learner focus group

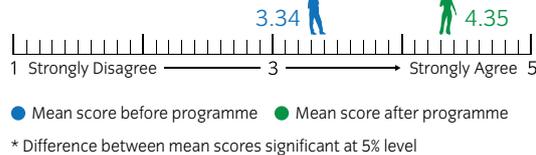
Figure 44: I am able to write a good CV*



They have given us more than we expected. To build a CV, [to know] which career you can go through.

Learner focus group

Figure 45: I know how to prepare for an interview*



Development of these soft skills gave the learners confidence and were again the issues which they often cited as the biggest developments in themselves. They often discussed their pride at now being able to operate in these more formal environments, something they felt was out of their grasp prior to the programme.

6

Differences between rural and urban schools

The role of JASA in this [rural community] is different than that in Johannesburg. I equate a Johannesburg school with a western society. There you can focus on skills transfer; they can really see the value of marketing and packaging. In the community it's more valuable to transfer confidence.

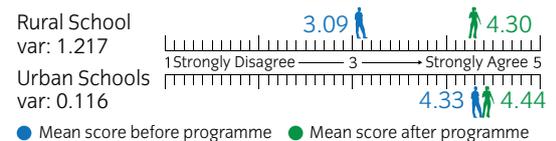
Facilitator

The statement above from one of the facilitators indicates the potential for differences in the impact of the programme across rural and urban schools, particularly as regards expectations and the perceived feasibility of utilising the skills learnt from the programme. Although there was flexibility in the delivery of the Academy, it was designed as a single programme and did not specifically include any contextualisation of the approaches and curriculum. It was therefore useful to analyse any differences in the programme's impact across rural/urban locations, particularly because of the different exposure to commerce.

Across every variable, the size of the change before and after the Academy programme was greater for the learners from the rural school, in comparison to the Johannesburg-based schools. It is, however, also worth highlighting that every competency, but one, showed a positive increase throughout the schools and that across every competency learners from the urban schools indicated a higher starting level in comparison to the rural learners.

When asked whether they have a realistic understanding of what self-employment involves, learners from the rural school showed a mean increase of 1.22 points, in comparison to just 0.12 for the Johannesburg-based schools (Figure 46). The mean level before the programme in the rural location was, however, only at 3.09 in comparison to 4.33 for the urban schools. After the course, however, the rural learners indicated a similar mean level to the urban schools (4.30 and 4.44 respectively).

Figure 46: I have a realistic idea of what being self-employed involves



As Figure 47 shows, the changes in learners' abilities to develop a budget had the highest mean changes across the three schools, with the rural location improving by a mean of 1.35, in comparison to 0.54 for the urban schools, although the pre-programme levels were the lowest across all factors, with just 3 and 3.81 for the rural and urban schools respectively. This was, however, also the issue which attracted the most variation in learners' responses from the rural school, indicating that this was not a uniform development throughout the entire class. This was something that was clearly notable during the focus groups. There was a great level of variation in learners' confidence and ability to discuss issues from the programme which was not as evident in either of the urban locations. This could be because of a greater variation in abilities or because of greater encouragement from the facilitator in the rural location to ensure learners stayed

in the programme rather than letting those that did not have the required commitment drop out. Furthermore, Figure 48 shows that when it came to understanding the difference between income and profit, the urban schools had the highest score upon completion (4.6) and the rural school moved from 3.39 to a mean level of 4.43. This was, however, in contrast to the outcomes from the focus group discussions which seemed to indicate that financial knowledge was one of the weakest areas upon completion of the course.

Figure 47: I know how to draw up a budget

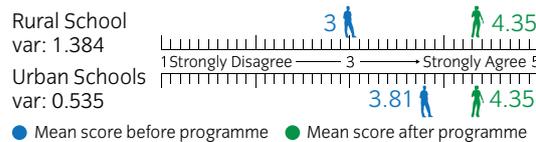
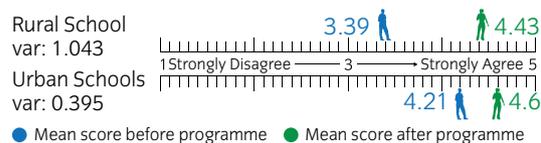
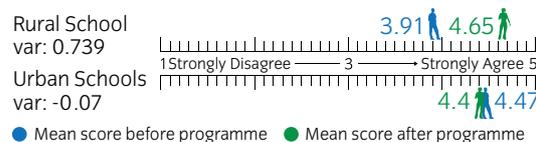


Figure 48: I know the difference between income and profit



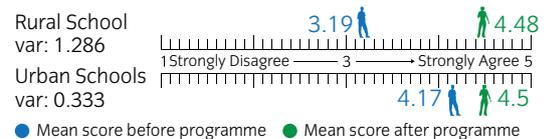
When asked about their ability to open a bank account (Figure 49) learners indicated the highest starting level across all schools, as well as one of the highest mean scores upon completion for both rural and urban, and therefore the lowest mean change in both locations (0.74 and -0.07 in rural and urban respectively).

Figure 49: I know how to open a bank account



Understanding competitive advantage is one of the key issues when beginning an enterprise and again Figure 50 shows there was a significant increase in perceived development in this knowledge area in the rural location of 1.29, in comparison to an increase of just 0.33 in the urban schools. There was also a large variation in the responses from the rural school, supporting the focus group discussions which clearly supported this. The large changes indicated by the rural learners meant that post-course perceived levels were virtually equivalent to those of the urban learners.

Figure 50: I understand what gives a business a competitive advantage



Learners during the focus groups in all locations emphasised the need for market research and the ability to identify demand for products. Perceived changes in understanding how to identify demand for products was high, with an increase of 1.26 in the rural school and a change in the urban schools of 0.44 (the second highest of all the competencies). This was one of four factors in which the rural school had a mean level after the programme higher than the urban schools, at 4.39 in comparison to 4.35. This was interesting to note, as understanding demand was one of the biggest issues faced by the rural school during the mini-enterprise; because of issues in co-ordination, one group focused on a product which was simply not feasible but that they had identified there was a demand for. It seems that this experience may have brought a sense of realism to the learners but also assisted them to understand the

market and feasibility of the scale of a potential enterprise better. This is further supported by the level of change in terms of identifying potential customers, with a mean increase of 1.17 in the rural location (Figure 52). It was clear that although encountering issues whilst running the mini-enterprise had an impact on the profitability of their enterprise within the period of the programme, it did provide them with a firmer grounding of the issues they would face in the market, which is simply not possible in a solely theory-based enterprise programme.

Figure 51: I could work out whether there was a demand for my service or product

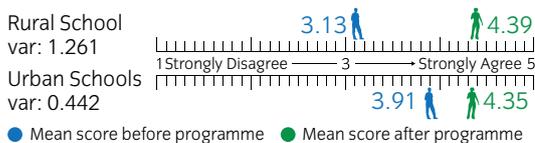
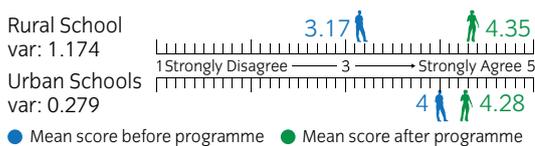


Figure 52: I could work out who potential customers were



Business planning was emphasised by both learners and facilitators as an important tool and one which many of the learners indicated they had not previously taken into account. It is surprising therefore that, as Figure 53 shows, perceived change in this competency was not relatively high. Although it was above a single point in the rural location at 1.04, it was just 0.19 in the urban schools. This was a component that virtually none of the learners had had any experience of previously and it is therefore interesting to note that learners from both locations indicated this as relatively high (3.43 and 4.21 respectively) before starting the course. Perceived understanding around

setting prices (Figure 54) had a similar starting level in both locations to the question of writing a business plan (Figure 53). The post-programme level in the urban schools was, however, greater and was the highest level for the urban schools across all of the competencies (4.63). This level of competence was supported in the focus groups for both locations, as learners often discussed this competency in relation to the changes they had to make during the mini-enterprise programme, which clearly had a positive practical impact.

Figure 53: I can write a business plan

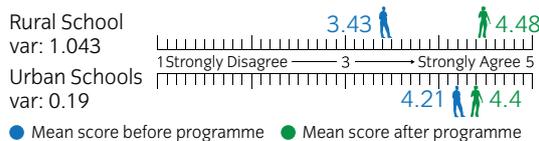
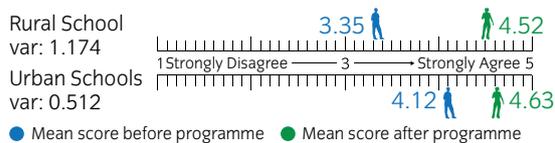
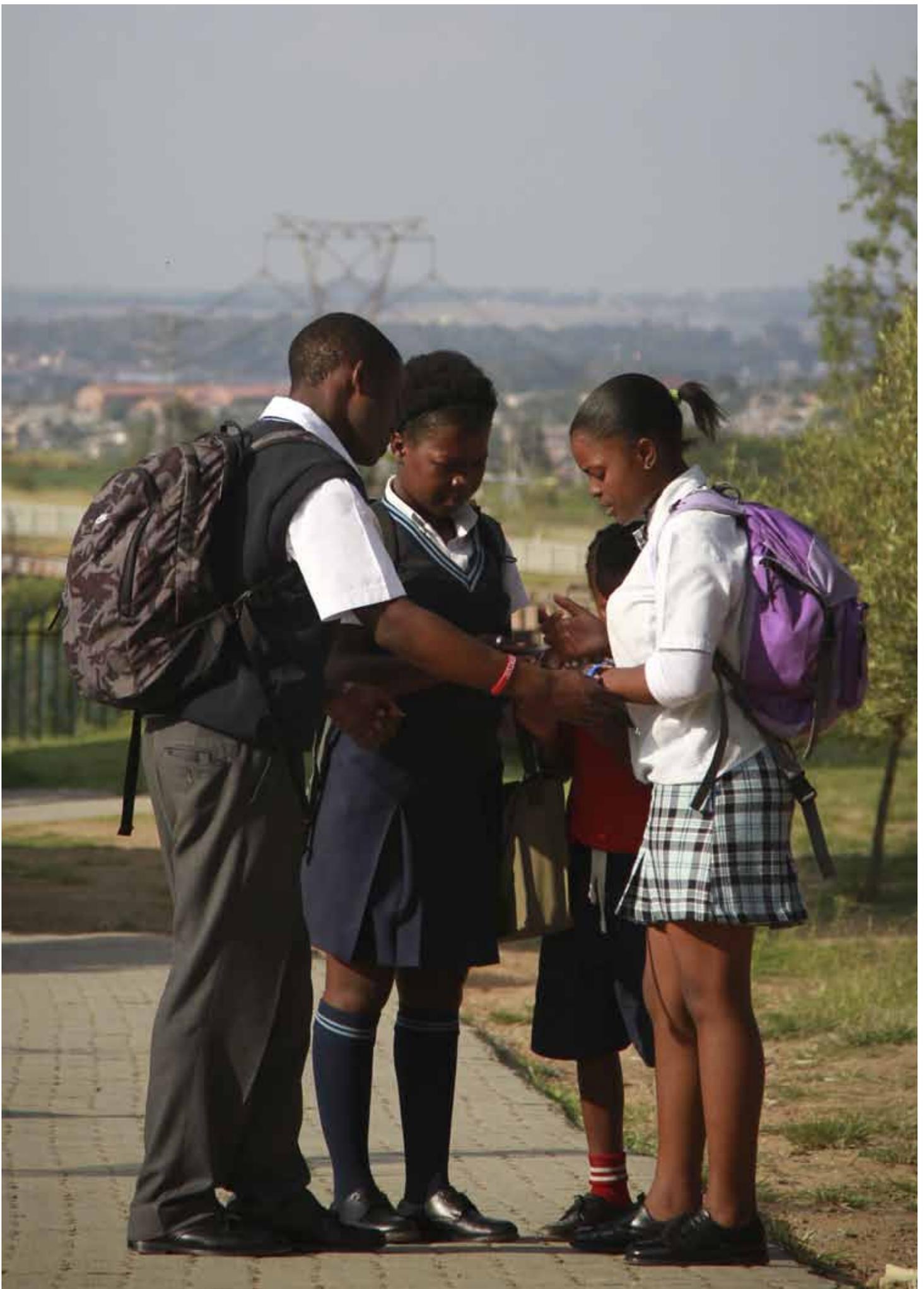


Figure 54: I understand how to set prices





7

Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

The empirical analysis and the focus groups indicate that, for the learners who completed the programme, JASA was broadly effective in each of its three aims.

In terms of increasing their **propensity to become entrepreneurs**, learners reported significant changes in their perceptions of the financial prospects of entrepreneurship, improvements in family and friends' attitudes toward entrepreneurship as a career path, and increased confidence that they would be able to undertake a range of activities involved in setting up a business. Even though learners' enthusiasm for entrepreneurship was tempered by their increased realism about the challenges associated with it, these changes can reasonably be expected to translate into a **higher number of learners engaging in entrepreneurial activities** than would have been the case had they not been exposed to the programme.

The programme also clearly had an effect on learners' **ability to run an enterprise successfully**, once they engage in entrepreneurial activity. Learners reported significant improvements in their knowledge about business principles and their practical business skills after the course. It can be expected that these changes will have a **positive impact on the success rates for those learners who do start their own business** relative to expected success rates if the programme had been absent.

The evaluation showed that the programme was effective in developing **transferable skills that are useful in employment as well as self-employment**, including teamwork, communication and planning. Learners also indicated that they had

significantly more confidence in presenting themselves to employers after completing the programme. The high rate of youth unemployment in South Africa makes finding a job a formidable challenge for the young people engaged on these courses, and this context will clearly affect the ultimate outcomes of the programme. Nevertheless, the evaluation suggests that they will be **better prepared to make use of the employment opportunities that are available**.

Finally, although the facilitators seemed to think that the programme in the rural area had not run as effectively as it could have done, the questionnaires and the focus groups indicated that the group that remained in the programme had made large gains in most areas covered during the project. The learners from the rural school started from a lower level of knowledge and competence in most areas, and this made the delivery of the programme more challenging, highlighting the **need to build flexibility into the programme to deal with different economic and academic contexts**. For the rural school, the programme also provided insights into the world outside of their fairly isolated community and the value of this should be recognised in assessing the impact of the project.

For other organisations looking to initiate or develop enterprise programmes, the JASA programme is certainly a useful baseline in highlighting the potential benefits. It was clear that the programme did not equip learners with the skills to immediately move into self-employment, something that was also not expected for a programme targeted at high school learners. This is not to say that the programme was not effective but it does highlight the **potential need for**



organisations to re-evaluate how they determine success in their programmes, even when targeting active labour market participants. It is clearly not feasible to look at the numbers of individuals moving into self-employment after a project, as a useful measure of success, as it may be the conscious movement away from self-employment which for a particular individual is deemed success.

7.2 Recommendations

The JASA programme utilised a variety of elements from different JASA enterprise units, to develop an integrated enterprise programme. The make-up of the programme was in line with a lot of the recommended content from previous project evaluations and enterprise literature. The project was

largely successful and had a significant impact on the learners, particularly in the rural school. There are a variety of benefits and lessons which can be derived from the JASA programme for other organisations seeking to develop an effective enterprise programme. The following section is therefore split into two parts:

- The first section outlines recommendations for other projects from the approach taken and the issues experienced in the existing JASA programme.
- The second section provides recommendations for potential additions to the existing JASA programme, which may also be relevant to other projects.

Key lessons learned from the JASA approach

- 1 The **timing and duration** of the programme are the key to reducing dropout rates and ensuring that learners are able to learn effectively. The JASA course was scheduled at a time and location that was accessible to all (in the school and after the school day had finished). The classes were, however, relatively long which was a significant commitment for the learners, meaning many dropped out, and facilitators often struggled to retain learners' engagement throughout the duration of the training.
- 2 The **facilitator/trainer** is the most important factor in ensuring the programme is successful. Providing sufficient preparation and training to the facilitator/trainer is therefore essential. This includes pre-programme training, effective support materials and dynamic feedback channels throughout the duration of the programme.
- 3 **Learner support materials** should be aligned with the contextualised needs of the learner, and should provide a reference point for learners throughout the practical elements of a programme. There is also the potential for the support materials to serve as a portfolio for the learners as they progress with their career.
- 4 Starting and maintaining a **mini-enterprise** was an essential process for learners to put theory into practice and to develop a greater understanding of some of the pitfalls and risks of running an enterprise. This essential knowledge would not be effectively learnt through a solely classroom-based programme. Encouraging learners to reflect on the risks and pitfalls they face or could potentially face is imperative in developing self-efficacy and decision-making.



- 5 Engaging **guest speakers** to share their experiences in business was an important, and, in some cases, under-utilised approach to give grounding to key course components. As the majority of these guest speakers were from the local community, they provided an effective demonstration of what learners may be able to achieve, something to which many of the learners, who are from communities with high unemployment, rarely had access.
- 6 Assessing the impact of programmes should not be focused exclusively on the number of learners who move into self-employment upon completion. Although it is not possible to provide specific criteria for measuring impact because every context is different, **programme indicators** must take into account soft skill and self-efficacy development, alongside the take-up of technical enterprise knowledge.
- 7 With these factors in mind, a focus on developing self-confidence, employability skills and soft skills is an essential approach to any enterprise programme. In the JASA programme it was these attributes that were clearly evident in the learners, regardless of their enterprise knowledge and intentions to begin a business. **Confidence and other soft skills** are often lacking in individuals from groups who face multiple disadvantages or prejudice. These skills are, however, essential for all types of employment, as well as personal development.
- 8 Understanding the **context within which learners are operating** is essential to improving the effectiveness of programmes. A one-size-fits-all model is simply not feasible, as contextual factors are a key determiner in shaping aspirations and intentions.
- 9 **Engagement with the wider community** is a potential way of raising the esteem of self-employment and has been shown to be an important approach for learners to gain greater support for their enterprise.
- 10 The most effective **language of instruction** must be taken into account for all the locations in which the programme will be rolled out. It must be acknowledged that this may differ according to location and programme materials and delivery may need to be adapted.



Key recommended additions to the programme

While the evaluation indicated that the JASA programme as a whole was effective, it also yielded some suggestions for improvement, which other projects may also want to consider:

Recognition of achievement

Learners emphasised that they had put a substantial amount of time and effort into the programme and that it would be good to have greater recognition of this commitment. The two issues in particular which emerged were:

- › learners expressed a strong desire to have certificates that proved they had participated in the programme
- › learners consistently discussed how positive they felt when they had their commitment to the programme recognised. Facilitators and learners alike mentioned the possibility of an end-of-programme party which would be an instant reward for their hard work and commitment to the programme.

Work experience and business visits

Relatively few learners had gained work experience and only one school had been able to visit a business. Those learners that did have exposure to either, or both, felt they had gained valuable experience and improved understanding of some of the factors discussed during the classes, and therefore there may be benefits from:

- › developing a network of businesses for visits and placements that could help learners to see businesses in action, and gain work experience placements during or after the course.



Facilitator support

The effective delivery of a programme is completely dependent on the presence of a good facilitator, and ensuring they are prepared to deliver all aspects of the programme in an engaging way is essential to the programme's future success. With this in mind, the following recommendations may provide further support for facilitators:

- › Providing a handbook with teaching ideas for sessions could help less experienced facilitators use the teaching time more effectively. The handbook could contain easier and more challenging examples to accommodate differences in groups' abilities, and also differences in the facilities and resources available at the school.
- › Advice around what a successful mini-enterprise programme would look like was emphasised as particularly important, as this would help facilitators to manage learners' expectations.

Peer exchanges

Learners and in some cases facilitators often highlighted that they did not know what success should look like for them. Establishing approaches through which both learners and facilitators are able to share relevant information and learn from each other could potentially improve the effectiveness of the programme. This could be particularly important for the learners to begin to build up their own network:

- › Learners felt they would enjoy meeting with learners from other programmes to share experiences and compare business ideas. They emphasised that this would be a good learning experience.
- › It was highlighted that developing a central system for facilitators to source additional lesson support materials, particularly providing practical examples of theory, would be of benefit. This was emphasised as particularly important for facilitators that were new to programmes.

Managing dropouts

Any optional programme will have dropouts, often because the programme does not match their expectations. JASA, however, seemed to have been effective in disseminating information about what the programme involved but still had a significant number of dropouts. One of the primary issues in this was managing learners' expectations:

- › The biggest challenge of the programme was ensuring that it was completed within the limited time constraints. When this was not possible, it had an impact on learners' expectations. It may therefore be of benefit to provide more structure to the curriculum in terms of JASA advising on completion deadlines for the different curriculum components.

- › An initial assessment of the knowledge levels and capacity of the learners may be a way of identifying whether individuals have the ability to complete the programme and what additional support different learners may need.

The mini-enterprise project

The mini-enterprise project clearly provided the learners with an effective opportunity to put theory into practice. However, ensuring that expectations both of facilitators and learners are managed is essential in ensuring success of the mini-enterprise component:

- › Ensuring sufficient financing for the enterprise was an issue that facilitators seemed to take on themselves in some circumstances, providing some of the initial capital to groups, to encourage the success of the project component. This often left the facilitators out of pocket and is clearly not sustainable throughout the course of the project. Providing greater support and guidance to the facilitators and learners to be able to manage financial commitments, and ensuring this is fully understood at the outset of the programme, is essential.

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