

Career Expo Report

2014



SUBMISSION BY:

Middelburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(NPO Nr: 019338)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improving the Business and Investment Climate (BIC) has become an important topic in the South African discourse on economic development. This is based on the realisation that efforts to increase the global competitiveness can be offset by the negative effects of disadvantageous legal, political and institutional frameworks. Not all of the dimension of a favourable business climate – e.g. labour legislation - can be directly influenced by interventions at the local level. Nevertheless, improving the Local Business and Investment Climate (LBIC) is a crucial element of successful business growth, as the local level is an important implementation and feedback level for business climate reforms, and only in the context of a favourable LBIC can the local economy reach its full potential. Initiatives which pursue Local Economic Development (LED) will only show very limited and isolated effect on the local economy if they are designed within a disadvantageous or even hostile LBIC. Therefore, improving the LBIC should not only be a generic element of macro-level oriented BC programmes, but also of LED processes. The LBIC – and LED in general - is influenced by the private and public sector alike. While government is responsible for creating an enabling environment for economic development, it is the responsibility and interest of business to inform government on their requirements and to build its own competitiveness by a variety of measures.

MCCI and STLM decided to form a partnership to address the skills shortage in STLM area. The BLC have the Department of Education (DOE) as a partner in this event and they completely support this event. The local demand and the supply on skills development are not balanced and awareness should be created amongst learners on what opportunities the area contains. This project focuses specifically on youth and the unemployed youth.

According to the global employment trends: May 2012 / International labor office – Geneva: Ilo, 2012 Globally, the youth unemployment rate was 12.6 per cent in 2011 and projected at 12.7 per cent in 2012, the global youth unemployment rate remains at least a full percentage point above its level in 2007. Nearly 75 million youth are unemployed around the world, an increase of more than 4 million since 2007.

South Africa's unemployment figures stood at 25% for the past year and were at 24.9% in the second quarter, according to the latest official statistics.

Youth unemployment in South Africa has reached boiling point and has spurred on heated political debates and mass protests ending in violence. Governments around the world have tried to react to the mass youth protests and the swelling problem by implementing labor market policies, such as subsidized wages, tax incentives and encouraging school-work transition through apprenticeships and training programmes.

However, the unemployment figures have continued to soar and have not shown signs of slowing down.

The rising levels of youth unemployment can be effectively curbed through the promotion of entrepreneurship as a viable career choice for young South Africans. However, it requires a committed change in South Africa's public perception and culture.

Bleak outlook for young South Africans - Sep 04 2012 20:26 Sapa-AFP

Youth unemployment in SA has reached the edge and everything possible should be done in order to assist our youth's future.....

STLM had huge numbers leaving the municipal area but limited numbers entering the area. One of the reasons was that school learners indicated there are no opportunities for them to stay here and that is why they leave for the city. However on the other side businesses commented that they have all these open vacancies but no one that meets the job requirements specifically in the technical side of business. The local demand and the supply on skills development are not balanced and awareness should be created amongst learners on what opportunities the area contains.

It has become clear that the local industry requirements, with specific reference to technical skills are not being met. The purpose of the career expo is to expose the local youth to career opportunities in the Steve Tshwete Municipal area. The focus is on **Grade 9** (making subject choices) and **Grade 11/Grade 12** (ready to leave school).

The annual expo is scheduled in the beginning of the year in order to accommodate for bursary and learnership applications. The corporate companies closing date for bursaries and/or learnerships are usually in the first quarter of the year.

As one can see there is a great need for this career expo in our area to prevent skills shortage and to ensure the growth and expansion of the economy. The support and participation of the local career expo is very important and have a direct and positive influence in closing the skills gap.

Different corporate organizations exhibit their career opportunities in their business; discuss the opportunities of the different industries and how to get educated through the acceptable channels.

For the Grade 9 learner the expo is focused on explaining why math and science is so important and to motivate the learners to come to school and finish school – show casing all the possibilities out there. It is also a focus to show the learners which channels are available and how to access opportunities and how to earn a living. They are also assessed with an accredited assessment to give guidance and assistance with future subject choices. School principals appreciated the assessments conducted, as it was a first for some learners, guiding them on the right path.

For the Grade 12 learner the expo is focused on vacancies, learnership and bursaries. The main focus for the Grade 12's is to meet with the corporate companies' and to hand out curriculum vitae's and to follow the process of learnership and/or bursary applications. They get invited to listen to corporate companies and also get a quick talk on job application tips, interview tips and curriculum vitae (CV) writing tips straight from the companies.

- Career goodie bags are given to each participating school to take home. Corporate Companies also add their information to the bags. (Brainwaves held teacher training sessions, giving each attending teacher a discover your career manual by Dr. Lanette Hattingsh and Debbie de Jong.....containing the following information: Interests; Personality; Thinking Style; World of Work; Subject and studying options. This manual can be used in class to provide the learners the crucial career guidance information.

All 37 high schools (an average of 5000 learners) are signed on to participate from the three circuits of Steve Tshwete Municipal area every year.

The exhibitors such as local businesses, government departments and training colleges are all invited to participate. All the exhibitors explained the opportunities to the learners that existed within their different industries. The industry career paths are also explained to the learners. Business receives the following for sponsorship: an exhibition stand; opportunity to promote industry; opportunity to communicate skill shortage in specific business; marketing and awareness and an opportunity to explain bursary application procedures.

SUCCESSSES OF THE EXPO

- 37 schools attend
- Since 2009 – 2013 will be the 5th year
- Averages of 2500 assessments are done in the 2 days for all career expos.
- On average, between 3500 and 5000 learners visit the career expo.
- Informative talk sessions on how to prepare for a job interview, prepare a CV and what do corporate companies look for.
- Press releases – Opportunity Magazine, Mpumalanga Beeld, Middelburg Observer and Herald
- All participating schools received a career goodie bag. The career goodie bag included a 800 page career directory discussing each career in detail, tertiary institution call directory, job hunting skills

directory as well as a financial aid directory. The schools can use this to assist learners at school with career guidance.

- Platform for corporate company and learner to interact
- Schools have one career expo to attend so school learning hours are not interrupted, especially with for grade 12 learners
- Thus, corporate companies do not need to visit schools individually, they participate in this event every year to reach learners
- There are no costs to schools and learners
- Everything is funded by the municipality and the corporate companies
- Well supported by the community and business community
- Well supported by the tertiary institutions
- Growing annually with partner involvement
- Department of Education (DOE) also a partner in this event
- Annual date booked in the schools calendar confirmed with Department of Education (DOE).
- Possible expansion is in the near future for neighbouring towns as well as to the district

The other successes of this youth development project are that we try to motivate local learners, give them focus for the future, stimulate school attendance and improve pass rates. Learners realize there is hope. They can do something with their lives and earn a living not necessary to steal or fall pregnant to claim government grants. They can have a career like any other person. Learners acknowledge that they need to work hard and they can study locally while supporting their families.

Education is the key for the success of any future generation. Children today are exposed to social media that influence their mindset as it is. We, as their mentors, are responsible for guiding them in the right direction in terms of their education and future roles in our world.

It is a successful way of exposing the learners in the municipal area to local career opportunities. The main outcome will be to address the local demand and the supply on skills development which are not balanced. Awareness needs to be created amongst learners on what opportunities this area contains and still requires. The career expo is addressing the skill shortage locally.

The career expo creates a platform for learners to seek recruitment opportunities, bursaries and vacancies, and also a platform for the corporate company to meet and interact with the learner.

For the corporate companies it provides a place where thousands of learners can be reached and corporate company's vacancies, bursaries and learnership can be accessed. Also the corporate company distributes information on what skills, subjects etc. is needed if you want to work with a certain company or certain career.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Middelburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Steve Tshwete Municipality (STLM) and the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) did an investment climate study BIC) of the area in 2008.

This study highlighted the skills shortage in the local municipal area. The above contributed to the decision in 2009 to host a local career expo to provide opportunity to both learner and corporate company.

The career expo creates a platform to learner to seek recruitment opportunities, bursaries and vacancies.

For the corporate company it provides a place where thousands of learners can be reached and corporate company's vacancies, bursaries and learnership can be accessed. Also the corporate company distributes information on what skills, subjects etc. is needed if you want to work with a certain company or certain career.

The tertiary institutions also benefit from the career expo and the learner can also find information on closing dates, subjects and other criteria needed to be enrolled with such an institution.

The event was so successful in the past years that it is now an annual event in the Department of Education's (DOE) calendar.

The partnership between MCCI, DOE and STLM together created a strong relationship and ensured a powerful career expo 2014.

The event took place at the Middelburg Banquet Hall on the 17-20 February 2014.

The reason for the early schedule is to allow learners to complete applications in advance and be in time for bursary and learnership applications.

It is a successful way of exposing the learners in the municipal area to local career opportunities. The main outcome was to address the local demand and the supply on skills development which are not balanced. Awareness needs to be created amongst learners on what opportunities this area contains and needs.

The purpose of the expo was to motivate the learners to become focused on their future, and to choose subjects in accordance with their career choices. The expo was a great platform to show learners that there is hope to reach their dreams, and that through hard work they can further themselves to one day become a successful member of the community.

1.1 Career Expo

1.1.1 Partners

- Department of Education
- Middelburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Nkangala District Municipality
- Steve Tshwete Local Municipality

1.1.2 Sponsors

- African Dynamics
- Brainwaves Careers
- Columbus Stainless
- Eskom Kusile
- Vocational Training College – Safika Oosthuizen

1.1.3 Exhibitors

The exhibitors such as local businesses, government departments and training colleges were invited to participate. All the exhibitors explained the opportunities to the scholars that existed within their different industries. The industry career paths were also explained to the learners. The following exhibitors participated (listed in alphabetical order):

African Dynamics	Eskom Kusile	Samancor Ferrochrome
Anglo American Thermal Coal	Glencore	South African Police Services (SAPS)
Brainwave Careers (NPC)	Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC)	Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)
Columbus Stainless (Pty) Ltd	Nkangala District Municipality	Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (STLM)
Department of Education (DOE)	Nkangala FET College	Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
East Vaal Motors (Pty) Ltd	South African Council for Architectural Profession (SACAP)	Vodacom
Edu-Loan	Safika College – Vocational Training College	W&R Seta

We thank all participants (our Sponsors and Exhibitors) as their involvement ensured the success of the Career expo 2014.

1.1.4 Schools

37 schools participated and attended the Career expo with a lot of expectations and the overall feedback was satisfying. The learners appreciate this opportunity provided to them. ** Registers for all participating schools available on request.

1.1.5 Public

Citizens from the local community also walked through the exhibition hall and supported this event.

1.1.6 Career guidance sessions

Department of Education and Columbus Stainless held informative sessions for all attendees. Information was discussed on different careers as well as special focus on Engineering. The learners had the opportunity to ask questions and to participate in a quiz with sponsored prizes.

**Thank you to DOE, Columbus and Vodacom

1.1.7 Life Orientation Teacher training

Brainwaves held teacher training sessions, giving each attendee a Discover your career manual by Dr. Lanette Hattingh and Debbie de Jong.....containing the following information: Interests; Personality; Thinking Style; World of Work; Subject and studying options. This manual can be used in class to provide the learners the crucial career guidance information.

**Thank you to Brainwaves Careers

1.1.8 Science experiments

Various science experiments were also conducted during the expo to motivate learners to choose Mathematics and Science as future subjects. The learners thoroughly enjoyed these experiments and displayed great interest in and enthusiasm for, math and science.

**Thank you to Mondi Mobile Science Clinic

2 CONCLUSION

Internationally praised project – the Local Annual Career Expo received an international award (top 5) at the International Chamber of Commerce and World Chamber Forum congress in Doha, Qatar April 2013.

Participation and enthusiasm of learners, teachers and exhibitors made the career expo the celebrated success for 2014.

Thank you to all who made this event possible, without you this would not have been possible.

We hope to see all our exhibitors again next year....2 - 6 March 2015 for another to be successful career expo.