



South Africa Siyasebenza



Reflections from the
Head of the Fund

About the Jobs Fund

The National Treasury established the Jobs Fund in June 2011 to support innovative initiatives and approaches to job creation. The R9 billion fund operates on challenge fund principles, and all funding allocations are made on a competitive basis in a transparent and open manner.

Once-off grants are awarded to projects that demonstrate sustainable job creation potential and project partners are required to match the grant fund allocations at a ratio of 1:1 or higher.

The Jobs Fund is not a mass employment programme, nor is it intended to tackle long-term structural causes of low growth and unemployment. Rather, it provides a targeted programme of support for effective labour market interventions that result in sustainable employment creation.

About Siyasebenza

Siyasebenza is the Jobs Fund's quarterly newsletter. *Siyasebenza* is an isiZulu word meaning "we are working".

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S i y a s e b e n z a

Advancing economic independence among youth and women through skills training and entrepreneurial support

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), an estimated 736 million women, nearly one in three globally, have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their lifetime. While progress has been made in advancing women's financial inclusion and economic empowerment, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), continue to undermine their potential and safety.

A [study](#) conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council confirms that economically empowered women are far less likely to experience GBV. Financial independence gives women the autonomy to make their own choices and the ability to walk away from unsafe environments. The Jobs Fund's partnerships with Sparrow Society and Lungisa Indlela Village (LIV) NPC demonstrate how targeted economic empowerment can break the interlinked cycles of poverty and GBV. These initiatives do more than teach skills; they provide mentorship, offer psychosocial support and open doors to market opportunities. They create pathways to economic opportunity that break the cycle of poverty, violence and exploitation. Through these partnerships the Jobs Fund helps survivors heal, rebuild and thrive – equipping them with practical training, trauma recovery, and access to sustainable livelihoods that foster resilience, independence and hope.

reduced vulnerability to GBV and strengthened community resilience. In communities where women's economic roles are recognised and valued, the power balance begins to shift and attitudes towards gender equality begin to improve. Achieving this change, however, requires engaging men and boys as allies in reshaping cultural and social norms.

Through co-funding these impactful interventions, the Jobs Fund goes beyond economic empowerment to tackle the underlying social and cultural drivers of GBV. At the same time, we reinforce the support systems that ensure survivors receive the protection, resources and opportunities they need to rebuild their lives and establish their independence. By working together and embracing new insights, we can create effective pathways to opportunity and help build a safer, more inclusive future for all women. 🌱

Najwah

Najwah Allie-Edries
Head of the Jobs Fund

To ensure meaningful and lasting impact, projects are monitored not only in terms of jobs created and incomes earned, but also through the social outcomes they deliver, such as

Sparrow Society: Funding SMMEs to contribute to the economic and social empowerment of GBV survivors

The scourge of GBV in South Africa remains one of the nation's most pressing human rights challenges.

With some of the highest rates of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and femicide globally, women suffer the devastating effects of GBV daily. Rooted in deep-seated gender inequality, poverty and entrenched social norms, this violence not only inflicts severe physical and emotional trauma on survivors but also weakens communities and hinders national development. Young women, particularly GBV survivors, often struggle with trauma, stigma and exclusion from economic opportunities. These barriers are further compounded by limited experience, weak networks and low confidence, making it difficult for women to secure sustainable employment or pursue entrepreneurship.



Since its inception, Sparrow Society has supported over **1 500 women**, with more than **70%** successfully securing **sustainable jobs or establishing micro-enterprises within six months of graduation**. Beneficiaries report an average quarterly income increase of **45%**, reflecting tangible gains in financial independence.

The Jobs Fund's partnership with Sparrow Society integrates economic empowerment with trauma-recovery support to directly address the challenges GBV survivors face. This initiative empowers GBV survivors from high-risk communities through trauma-sensitive, recovery-oriented training that tackles systemic barriers such as employer bias, limited opportunities and gendered workplace norms. Leveraging strong private sector partnerships, the project provides sought-after skills, facilitates meaningful job placements and creates entrepreneurship pathways in high-growth sectors like information and communication technology (ICT), retail and services. This holistic approach fosters healing and economic independence while cultivating a resilient pipeline of female talent – advancing inclusion and driving long-term transformation of the labour market. As one participant reflected, *“Before Sparrow, I had no hope. Now I not only have a job, but I can provide for my children and mentor other women in my community.”* These personal transformations highlight the intervention's multiplier effect.



KEY LESSONS

- The Sparrow Society model demonstrates that integrating employability training with trauma-informed psychosocial support enhances the effectiveness of the interventions. Participants showed greater engagement and openness when provided with a safe, non-judgmental space in both one-on-one and group sessions. The inclusion of journaling and goal tracking enabled personal accountability and growth, reinforcing that holistic support is key for sustainable growth.
- Flexibility in training and delivery enhances accessibility. Not all participants can attend sessions during working hours, especially those who have transitioned to home-based work or have family obligations. In response, Sparrow Society began offering workshops on different days, including Saturdays, which led to higher attendance and greater inclusivity.
- The Personal Development Plan (PDP), integrated across programmes, plays a critical role in helping participants process their experiences, set meaningful goals and build resilience in navigating trauma-related challenges. This underscores the value of a holistic, trauma-informed approach in supporting vulnerable women and youth. Going forward, the PDP framework will include new topics, such as grief, emotional regulation and self-advocacy, to address participants' evolving needs.
- Structural barriers significantly limit access to essential support and opportunities. Many participants, especially survivors, are often unaware of services available in their communities, creating barriers to accessing essential support such as housing, SASSA grants, legal aid and protection from abuse. To address this, resource mapping was introduced during PDP sessions, helping participants identify where and how to access the assistance they need.
- Monitoring and evaluation must be embedded in the delivery. Effective monitoring was critical in tracking participant progress, identifying gaps and refining workshop content in real time. Quarterly assessments and intake forms provided valuable insights to align interventions with participant needs. Sparrow Society plans to strengthen its monitoring systems by standardising outcome tracking and formally integrating participant feedback into sessions. 🌱



QUOTES FROM PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS:

“Don’t doubt yourself — perseverance is key. I never thought I could do this, but Sparrow believed in me and now I believe in myself. Every challenge has only made me stronger, and my dream is to keep growing so that my story can give hope to others.”

“Treat every step as an opportunity to learn. Never say, ‘I can’t’ – continue learning and you will make it.”



**Advancing gender equity by
Empowering Women,
creating Economic Opportunity,
& offering strategic support for
Survivors of Gender-Based
Violence**





The Liv Community Project strives to enhance the lives of economically disadvantaged and marginalised women by providing training, support and income-generating opportunities.

One of its three core components, The LIV Women's Clothing Programme, is designed to promote sustainable livelihoods and long-term community impact.

The programme scales and replicates an existing LIV NPC initiative that focuses on skills development, training, job creation and support for informal micro-enterprises. The

model generates income opportunities for participants in economically marginalised areas and rural communities, combining profitability with high social impact. Women from vulnerable communities receive training in personal development and new venture creation, and on completing the programme, they receive start-up merchandise bags containing clothing items for resale.

Sustainability is a foundational pillar of the programme. Women receive a R1 000 stock subsidy upon joining, with continued support as they reach specific milestones. The programme promotes peer support, learning and integration, reducing isolation and positively influencing home management, childcare and business operations. The initiative also emphasises physical wellness, entrepreneurial development, active community contribution, social responsibility and cultivating new ways of thinking.



KEY LESSONS

- Robust internal controls are essential for the programme and participants' success. The LIV strategy engages participants by ensuring a steady supply of quality stock, motivating ongoing purchases and involvement.
- Mentorship is a key element of the project implementation. Some participants face personal challenges that temporarily prevent them from restocking and continuing sales. To address this, mentors have introduced bag-buying "stokvel"-style strategies where groups pool their resources to assist those struggling to purchase stock. This approach has proven highly effective in sustaining participation and fostering group solidarity. 🌱



QUOTES FROM PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS:

"Being part of the program has not only revitalised me as a person, but it has also brought about a significant transformation in my family's situation."

"I can proudly say I'm a businesswoman, and it's clear that age is not a barrier to success. I'm grateful for the opportunity to leave a better legacy."



Celebrating Catalysts of Change



Over the past 15 years, CAPACITI has empowered more than 6 000 young South Africans with future-fit digital skills and meaningful employment opportunities. This growing pipeline of talent is strengthening our economy and contributing directly to national development priorities.

The programme's reach spans diverse regions, from Gauteng to the Eastern Cape, delivering tailored training and career pathways that are reshaping employer perceptions and unlocking new opportunities in high-growth sectors.

This year marked the inaugural launch of the CAPACITI Catalyst Awards, designed to celebrate visionary partners whose unwavering commitment has advanced CAPACITI's mission to address South Africa's most urgent challenges – youth unemployment, digital skills gaps and inclusive economic growth.

At the heart of this success is the catalytic support of the Jobs Fund, whose long-standing partnership has enabled CAPACITI to scale with innovation and sustainability. In recognition of this transformative collaboration, the Jobs Fund was honoured as the first-ever recipient of the CAPACITI Catalyst Award, a tribute to the Fund's role in accelerating change, fostering collaboration and igniting potential.



CAPACITI reported that this year's nominees were particularly remarkable. Beyond driving ecosystem-wide impact, they have played a pivotal role in CAPACITI's evolution. Their trust, shared vision and bold approach to innovation have served as a launchpad for each phase of CAPACITI's journey. Together, these partnerships have accelerated nearly 3 000 opportunities, resulting in R99 million in salaries earned – a powerful testament to the impact of strategic investment in youth.

As the Jobs Fund celebrates this milestone, we are reminded that real change is possible when government, business and civil society unite. The CAPACITI Catalyst Awards are more than a recognition of excellence – they inspire action, celebrate the power of collective impact and shine a beacon of hope for a more inclusive and empowered South Africa. 🌱



Jobs Fund Performance Update: 30 Sept 2025

FUNDING

JOBS FUND PARTNERS

OVERVIEW

R23.0 billion

total portfolio size

R7.6 billion

grant funding disbursed

R15.5 billion

matched funding leveraged from partners

1 : 2,03

matched funding ratio

R41 million

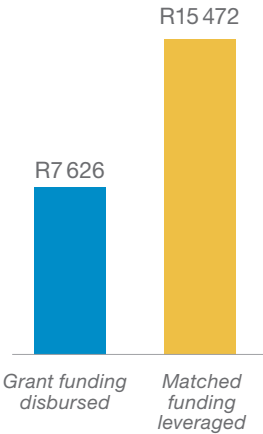
average grant disbursed per project

COST PER JOB

R23 650

grant cost per job
(includes the grant disbursed +
Jobs Fund operating costs – training costs)

Total funding for
job creation (R millions)



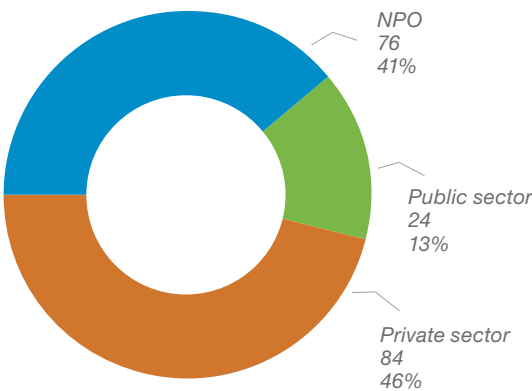
R25 360

grant cost per job
(includes the grant disbursed +
Jobs Fund operating costs)

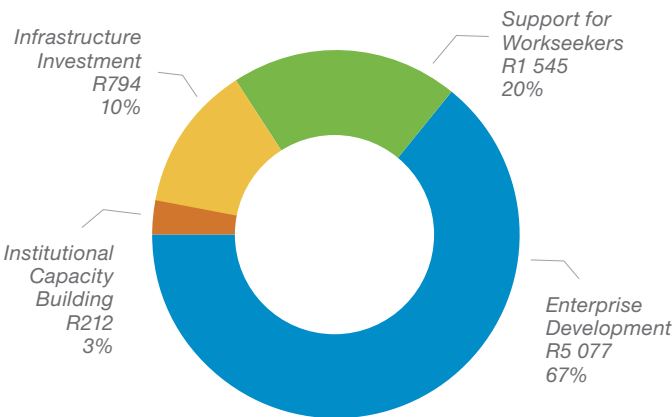
OVERVIEW

184
contracted projects

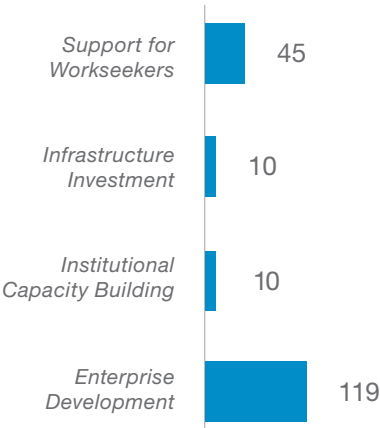
Projects by implementer type



Grant disbursed by funding window (R millions)

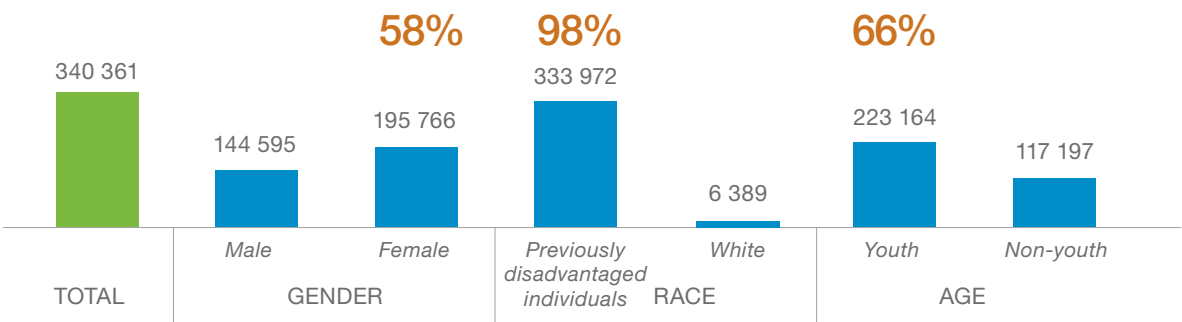


Projects by funding window



JOBS CREATION

Total jobs, placements & internships facilitated



Source: Jobs Fund database (showing actual figures reported by projects as at 30 September 2025)