



Freedom Front Plus

Youth Development Agenda Submission

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

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Executive Summary

South Africa's youth face some of the highest unemployment and educational inequality rates in the world.

The Freedom Front Plus submission offers practical, measurable solutions. The Freedom Front Plus promotes policies rooted in freedom, meritocracy, accountability, and community-based empowerment, rather than centralized, ideology-driven interventions.

The Freedom Front Plus stands by the principle that "The future is in our hands" — and that our future must be earned through empowerment, not entitlement.

The Youth Challenge:

- Youth Unemployment: As of Q1 2025, South Africa's expanded youth unemployment rate (ages 15–34) stands at 59.7% (Stats SA, 2025).

- NEET Rate: 3 in 10 South Africans aged 15–24 are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET).

- Vocational Skills Gap: The World Bank reports that over 40% of South African employers struggle to find appropriately skilled workers.

Inclusive Economic Growth

The Freedom Front Plus supports inclusive economic growth driven by free-market principles, individual enterprise, and equal opportunity.

Inclusion must not mean state-enforced outcomes or ideological redistribution, but rather the empowerment of all communities through access to tools that enable self-sufficiency.

We need to remove excessive regulations that hamper youth entrepreneurship and we need real support for our small businesses.

Practical steps include:

- Tax relief for businesses owned by youth.
- Simplified business registration for SMME's.
- Decentralized business incubators in rural/township areas.

Examples:

- Removing race-based procurement that allows all youth to compete fairly, fostering innovation and economic growth without fear, favor or political connections.

Industrialization and Employment

Industrialization must be grounded in skills development, economic freedom, and a pro-investment environment.

The Freedom Front Plus believes that youth employment is best advanced by enabling the private sector, not by bloated or politicized state employment schemes.

Critical to this is the transfer of skills in digital technologies, green industries, trades, and engineering—fields where South Africa faces a major skills shortage.

SETA programs, while intended to close this gap, have largely failed. Many are plagued by mismanagement, outdated curricula, and poor oversight, leaving our youth unprepared for the real economy. Instead, we advocate for private sector-led training partnerships, dual vocational training (as in Germany), and regional technical colleges focused on trades, coding, and renewable energy.

Practical steps include:

- Replace failing SETAs with industry-led vocational programs.
- Implement dual vocational education.
- Build regional technical colleges in priority trades and tech.

Examples:

- Skills hubs in Kenya and Rwanda that integrate private companies with technical training centers, show how partnerships outperform bureaucratic institutions like SETAs.
- In South Africa, the AgriSETA's underperformance in rural youth training is a clear warning—oversight and accountability must be restored.

Meaningful Youth Engagement

The Freedom Front Plus rejects tokenistic youth representation in favor of meaningful engagement rooted in democratic participation, civic education, and leadership training.

Youth must be equipped to actively participate in governance at local, provincial, and national levels—not through quotas, but through merit-based empowerment.

Young leaders must be trained to question, think critically, and innovate.

Practical steps include:

- Create community-based, non-partisan leadership academies.
- Establish functioning Youth Parliaments in all provinces.
- Integrate civic education into school curricula.

Examples:

- Youth Parliaments in Scandinavian countries, which give high schoolers practical legislative experience, build future leadership.

Inclusive Social Development

Social development must uplift communities through opportunity and dignity—not dependency.

The Freedom Front Plus envisions a model where education, entrepreneurship, and family support replace top-down redistribution and racial engineering.

Welfare should be a safety net, not a trap. Local NGOs and faith-based groups should be supported in delivering social upliftment, not sidelined by centralized bureaucracies.

Practical steps include:

- Prioritize NGO and faith-based delivery of social support.
- Promote community-led co-operatives for local job creation.

Healthy Global Trade and Development Relations

The Freedom Front Plus supports Africa's development through economic partnerships based on mutual respect, infrastructure development, anti-corruption reforms.

South Africa's role in Africa must be one of leadership and accountability.

We must grow our economy through healthy global trade while ensuring local sustainability.

Agenda 2063's vision of a united and prosperous Africa must not come at the cost of any youth.

Rather, South Africa's youth must benefit from:

- Strategic trade relations with Europe, the US, and Africa,
- Infrastructure investment that connects rural areas to markets,
- Youth-driven intra-Africa export ventures, especially in agriculture and tech.
- Expand youth involvement in AfCFTA trade ventures.

Universal Access to Education

The Freedom Front Plus defends every child's right to quality education that is affordable, apolitical, and in their home language. We reject centralized, ideology-driven education that stifles excellence. Instead, we promote academic freedom, mother-tongue education, and technical training for employability.

Research consistently shows that mother-tongue instruction in early years leads to better comprehension, cognitive development, and long-term academic success.

Practical steps to take:

- Protect mother-tongue education in all official languages.
- Support for community-run schools in all languages,
- Depoliticize the national curriculum.
- Expand vocational and technical colleges linked to industries.

Examples:

- UNESCO confirms that learners in home language instruction outperform peers in all subjects by Grade 4 (UNESCO, 2022).

Conclusion

South Africa's youth do not need more handouts or ideological promises.

They need a framework of freedom, opportunity, and accountability. The Freedom Front Plus is committed to a future where young people are creators, not dependents.

“The future is in our hands — let us shape it with integrity.”