



# Nurturing Africa's young leaders

With 78% of Uganda's population below the age of 30, Uganda has one of the youngest populations in the world<sup>1</sup>. The future of the nation lies in the hands of our young people.

As the country grapples with increasing adult unemployment at 4.8% with 13.3%<sup>2</sup> unemployment rate for youth, an additional 700,000 young people reach working age each year<sup>3</sup> and an annual population growth rate of 3.92%. It is expected that an estimated 13 million workers are expected to enter the job market by 2030.

Nelson Mandela once stated that **"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."** At Absa Bank Uganda, we recognise the tremendous power of this statement as well as the potential of our youth. We, therefore, continue to use education as a catalyst for positive change in our communities.

Through the Absa Scholarship programme, we provide scholarships to academically gifted but financially challenged students enrolled in over 10 universities in Uganda. Since inception, a total of 69 students have been awarded scholarships under the programme.

Understanding that quality education is only the first step. Absa's ReadytoWork programme, that has reached close to 10,000 students since its inception, helps youth transition from education to work life through and entrepreneurial skills that are necessary for young people to forge their own paths towards either employment or self-employment. In partnership with GIZ, the German Development Cooperation in Uganda, the programme has seen close to 2500 youth from 11 vocational Institutions complete the course with over 430 of these students further supported through internship placements.

In addition, as part of Absa Group, we provide scholarships to 100 outstanding young Africans from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend the African Leadership University in Rwanda. The beneficiaries are part of the Mandela Centennial Scholars Programme, which seeks to enhance the lives of outstanding young people from across the continent with unparalleled opportunities for leadership development.

We believe that by harnessing the dedication and work ethic that is inherent in our youth, we will continue to be an active force for good across all the communities in which we operate and help bring possibility to life.

# Here is how Absa has nurtured Africa's next generation of leaders.

**"I lost my grandfather a few months before starting my fourth year and was filled with so much worry because he had been paying my tuition. I was so worried because I did not know how I was going to go ahead with school. Luckily, I had applied to the programme and received the scholarship, which not only covered tuition but also a brand new laptop – which I needed for my research – accommodation, meals and psychosocial support. My final year was so relaxed thanks to this support, which led to my grades improving, and as a result of the training we got in how to tackle job interviews and writing competitive CVs, I was shortlisted for a job I applied for during my current internship."**

*Nazibanja Lilian, BSc. Nursing graduate from Mbarara University of Science & Technology and one of the Scholarship recipients.*

**"The programme, first and foremost, came with tuition and upkeep, which was of great help to myself and my family. Secondly, the psychosocial support we received helped me develop social skills that are needed outside what we learn in school. This helped me develop self confidence and better communicate with others, in addition to other skills that have been helped me embrace my work."**

*Oyuru Amos, BSc. Pharmacy graduate from Makerere University and one of the scholarship recipients.*

**"Most of us (graduates) are ignorant about companies that could potentially offer us jobs after we complete our studies; the ReadytoWork project provided me with the opportunity to be placed at Nice House of Plastics (u) Ltd one of the most prestigious companies in Uganda as a machine operator. If it wasn't for the project, I wouldn't have had this connection."**

*Evalyn Abenaitwe, National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering; Uganda Technical College Bushenyi and ReadytoWork a beneficiary*

**"The ReadytoWork programme gave me much-needed communication skills which have greatly improved the way I communicate at work. We were taught how to approach and interact with different people to be more effective in the workplace, and I owe it all to the ReadytoWork programme."**

*Davis Nkamwesiga, BA Industrial Fine Art graduate from Uganda Christian University and beneficiary of the ReadytoWork program. Uganda Christian University*

**"Thank you Absa Group, this scholarship has allowed me to attain more leadership skills this year. I want to say that it has been an honour and a great achievement being admitted to ALU under this scholarship. Being a young person who is passionate about leadership and community transformation, I have gained more knowledge and skills on how to run my organisation, work with a diverse community and be there for other people. I intend to get and achieve more during this journey."**

*Clide Odhiambo, Global Challenges, Year 2*

**"ALU has taught me to embrace challenges with flexibility, boldness and a positive attitude as it is an opportunity for me to come up with solutions that address them."**

*Aloysious Tumusiime, International Business and Trade student, African Leadership University.*

<sup>1</sup> National Budget Framework Paper FY 2019-20.

<sup>2</sup> Promoting Employment through enhanced public infrastructure. UBOS May 2019 Labour Day Report

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2020/02/25/uganda-jobs-strategy-for-inclusive-growth>