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Novartis boosts youth employment in SA

Johannesburg, June 11, 2019 – Through an innovative learnership programme, pharmaceutical company Novartis South Africa is not only making a contribution toward addressing youth unemployment in South Africa but also equipping unemployed graduates with prerequisite skills to be more attractive in the globally competitive job market.

The latest stats from ¹Stats SA indicate that the youth aged 15–24 years of age are the most vulnerable in the South African labour market since the unemployment rate among this age group was 55,2% in the 1st quarter of 2019. Among graduates in this age group, the unemployment rate was 31,0% during this period compared to 19,5% in the 4th quarter of 2018 – an increase of 11,4 percentage points quarter-on-quarter.

Novartis South Africa HR Director, Anusia Pillay says, “This worthy investment in the youth of SA, amongst others, demonstrates our commitment and belief in the future of SA as one of our key and strategic markets on the African continent.”

“We are helping to build future leaders by exposing them to an agile corporate culture and global networks of a world-class company through a blended experience of practical learning and mentorship. Through this intensive programme, we combine the dynamic field of sales and the intricacies of the ever evolving and complex pharmaceutical industry in the nurturing of these future executives.”

Gone are the days when the pharmaceutical industry was dominated by health professionals only such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, scientists and others. The growth and evolution of the industry over the years has created extensive value chains – opening-up endless opportunities for young people from across the professional spectrum.

To this end, the learnership programme was expanded in 2017 to include business administration to cater for graduates in the fields of information technology, marketing, human resources, finance and supply chain management. The practical nature of the programme

¹ <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12121>

provides learners with a smooth transition from university training to the corporate world – closing an important gap in the job market, particularly for university graduates.

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1. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12121>

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