



Scalabrini
Centre of Cape Town

INTEGRATION PATHWAYS

IMPACT REPORT 2025

OVERVIEW

The Integration Pathways Programme operated within a significantly altered landscape in 2025. In January, the programme was informed of the withdrawal of key funding from the United States of America's State Department, which directly impacted the Employment Access project and related initiatives. This development had far-reaching consequences for programme operations, staff capacity, and, most importantly, the clients who rely on these services as critical pathways to inclusion and self-reliance.

In response, the programme undertook a strategic recalibration to prioritise sustainability, continuity, and long-term impact. While several resource-intensive interventions such as vocational skills sponsorships, business grants, and the English School's WhatsApp classes all were suspended, core services were intentionally preserved.

The Employment Access Help Desk remained operational, continuing to provide essential services such as CV development and employment support. These foundational interventions are critical entry points into the labour market and remain central to enabling sustainable livelihoods. In parallel, in-house training programmes, including Job Readiness, Digital Literacy, and Small Business Development were maintained, reinforcing the programme's commitment to empowerment and agency.

The English School adapted through a semi-self-sustaining model, enabling continued delivery of Literacy and Beginner-level classes. This ensured that access to language acquisition, a cornerstone of integration, remained available to clients despite financial constraints. Despite a year defined by uncertainty and reduced resources, Employment Access sustained service delivery through strategic prioritisation, strengthened partnerships, and a focus on measurable outcomes. The programme demonstrated resilience and an unwavering commitment to expanding access to employment and livelihood opportunities for people on the move



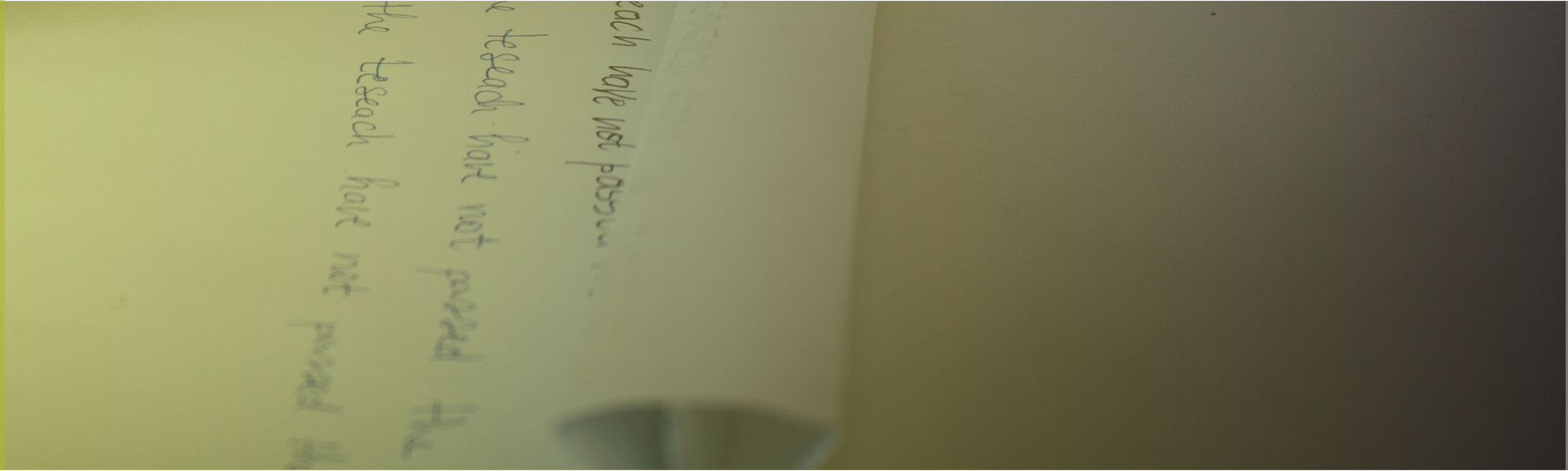


OVERVIEW CONTINUED

The UpLearn project remained largely stable throughout this period and continued to deliver high-quality academic support to students pursuing tertiary education. Through structured academic advisory services, students received ongoing guidance to meet academic requirements while navigating challenges related to time management, stress, and access to resources.

The UpLearn Lab and tutoring services were strengthened through peer learning and targeted academic support, particularly in high-demand subjects such as Mathematics and Finance. Academic Training interventions were designed to be flexible and responsive, incorporating Teach-Outs, Group Coaching, and Professional Development Services to support both academic success and future employability.

A key entry point into the programme, the Continuous Learning Space (CLS), functioned as both a preparatory and screening mechanism, ensuring that prospective students were adequately equipped for the demands of higher education. In 2025, enhancements to data tracking systems and weekly case coordination meetings enabled more tailored, responsive support for priority students thus resulting in improved engagement and academic outcomes.



HIGHLIGHTS & SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Continuous Learning Space recruitment process successfully enrolled 79 highly motivated students, including recent matriculants with limited alternative access to tertiary education.
- The UpLearn withdrawal rate decreased by 25% compared to 2024, reflecting strengthened support systems and sustained student engagement.
- Student life initiatives, including cultural, recreational, and wellness activities, fostered a sense of belonging and celebrated resilience and achievement.
- A major highlight was the graduation of 61 students from Southern New Hampshire University programmes, marking a significant academic milestone for participants.
- Students excelled in international platforms, with representation in the SNHU-GEM Debate Competition and participation in the HEaRT Internship Challenge.

Despite a challenging and restrictive context, the programme achieved several more significant milestones:

- The CISCO Networking Academy partnership enabled 52 participants to complete IT Essentials training, equipping them with market-relevant technical skills.
- Mid-year funding support enabled the sponsorship of 34 clients for vocational training and the awarding of 21 small business grants, critical interventions that will have lasting impacts on income generation and self-reliance.
- Cross-departmental collaboration strengthened organisational cohesion and expanded programme reach through joint initiatives and events.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS

In response to evolving needs and constraints, the programme introduced several innovative and adaptive initiatives:

- A partnership with Blackbullion expanded access to financial literacy training, enabling clients to build essential financial management skills through a structured digital platform.
- Collaboration with First National Bank enhanced financial literacy components within existing training programmes, strengthening both personal and business financial competencies.
- The redesign of Employment Help Desk tools, including CV templates and intake processes, improved accessibility and alignment with labour market expectations.
- Engagement with first-time job seekers informed a shift towards foundational employability training, ensuring that services remain responsive to client realities.

- A simplified, paper-based English placement assessment was introduced to better accommodate clients with limited digital literacy.
- The Work Experience Programme under Wrap-around Services expanded through new partnerships, creating additional pathways for practical, career-relevant experience.
- The integration of the Arizona State University online platform strengthened English language preparation, with demonstrated improvements in student performance.
- Academic Training enhancements, including curriculum alignment and revised Teach-Outs, ensured continued relevance and responsiveness to student needs.



A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

Tariro Phiri arrived in Cape Town with determination and a clear sense of responsibility. Like many who come in search of opportunity, her journey began with following a familiar path, her sister had come before her, and through that connection, she found her footing. Her first major step was securing work at Spur, where she committed herself fully, often taking on extra shifts to ensure she could support her family back home in Zimbabwe. Those long hours were not just about survival, they were about building something more. Through resilience and discipline, she began to see beyond immediate needs and started thinking about long-term growth.

Over time, she made a bold decision: to start her own business. With limited resources but strong determination, she began farming chickens from her backyard, starting with just 50 chicks. Today, that number has grown to 100, a testament to her consistency and entrepreneurial spirit. While working and building her business, she also invested in her education through the Southern New Hampshire University programme at the Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town. Like many students balancing work, family, and studies, submissions were not always smooth sailing. In fact, she laughs when recalling how deadlines seemed to arrive faster than expected, often at the most inconvenient times.

One of the most memorable moments came when she was heavily pregnant, nearing the birth of her child, with an assignment still due. What could have been an overwhelming situation became a turning point, with the support of the Integration Pathways team, she was guided, encouraged, and assisted to push through. That moment became a reminder that she was not alone on her journey.

“Those long hours were not just about **survival**, they were about building something **more**.

...

Through **resilience** and **discipline**, she began to see beyond immediate needs and started thinking about **long-term growth**.”



Through that support, she went on to complete both her associate's and bachelor's degrees. This achievement marked a turning point, not just academically, but personally. It helped her clarify her goals and strengthened her belief that she could shape her own future. Now living with her husband and three boys, she continues to balance multiple responsibilities. She currently works at a bed and breakfast in Sea Point while growing her poultry business and participating in a mentorship programme. She describes herself as still developing, still learning but firmly on a path of growth.

Her journey came full circle on graduation day, when her family was able to watch her walk across the stage. For someone who once struggled to meet deadlines while juggling life's many demands, that moment was more than a ceremony, it was a powerful symbol of perseverance, growth, and possibility. Her story is one of persistence, adaptability, and vision. From working long shifts to support her family, to building a business, overcoming challenges, and earning her degree, she shows that progress may not always be linear, but with determination and the right support, it is always within reach.

Progress may not always be **linear**, but with **determination** and the right support, it is always within **reach**.

NUMBERS FOR 2025

UPEARN



79

ADMISSIONS FOR 2025



103

TEACH-OUTS



TRAINING

12

GROUP COACHING SESSIONS COMPLETED



260

UPEARN LAB ATTENDANCE PER MONTH



1700

INDIVIDUAL COACHING SESSIONS



5

INTERNSHIPS COMPLETED

GRADUATES

30

ASSOCIATES OF SCIENCE GRADUATES

15

BACHELORS GRADUATES

135

ENGLISH SCHOOL GRADUATES

TRAINING



388

JOB READINESS TRAINING

34

SPONSORED SKILLS TRAINING

326

DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING

90

SMALL BUSINESS SKILLS TRAINING

DEVELOPMENT

488

NEW CV'S CREATED

533

EMPLOYMENT HELP DESK CONSULTATIONS

21

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

IMPACT

12

FOREIGN PROFESSIONALS DESK INCLUDING SAQA APPLICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL BODY REGISTRATIONS

17

EMPLOYED/INCREASED INCOME

77

CONTINUOUS LEARNING SPACES COMPLETED

PLANS FOR 2026

In 2026, Integration Pathways will continue to build on its adaptive approach while strengthening its impact

- Launch of Talk Life, a student-led social initiative aimed at fostering confidence, connection, and holistic development.
- Introduction of a peer-based mentorship model within Business Development to promote experiential learning and shared growth.
- Expansion of Group Coaching services to enhance student engagement, retention, and wellbeing.
- Continued strengthening of academic monitoring systems and holistic student support through coordinated, team-based approaches.
- Deepening and expanding partnerships with financial institutions, public services, and civil society organisations to strengthen referral pathways and service accessibility.
- Ongoing adaptation of Employment Access services to meet evolving client needs, particularly in relation to job readiness and sustainable livelihoods



The centre is registered with the South African Department of Social Development as a non-profit organisation (021-079 NPO), as a youth and child care centre (C7569) and as a Public Benefit Organisation with the South African Revenue Services (930075335) and governed by a Trust (IT2746/2006).

Auditors: PKF Constantia Valley Cape Town Inc

VAT number: 478 025 1437

43 - 47 Commercial Street, Cape Town. 8001

Tel: (0) 21 465 6433

www.scalabrini.org.za

