

# Female entrepreneurs graduate from Mastercard SA programme

 By Tom Jackson

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More than 120 young South African women have graduated from a Mastercard-funded initiative that empowers women to pursue entrepreneurial ventures of their own.



The programme – the Junior Achievement South Africa (JA South Africa) Youth Enterprise Development Programme 2017 – targets out-of-school, unemployed or self-employed women aged 18 to 35.

Over the 20-week programme, the women participated in theoretical and practical sessions focused on business theory, market research, financial and business management, sales and marketing, computer literacy and business funding. They also gained practical interpersonal skills and business experience by starting up and managing their own businesses.

“Empowering young women to rise above systemic challenges they face and to participate in the economy through entrepreneurship is a key way of helping to develop self-sufficient communities,” said Nelly Mofokeng, managing director at JA South Africa.

“At Mastercard, we believe South African women from disadvantaged backgrounds should have better access to financial and entrepreneurship tools that enable them to realise their full potential and achieve prosperity,” says Mark Elliott, division president for Mastercard Southern Africa.

“Together with likeminded organisations like JASA, we can advance opportunities for young South African women by helping them develop the skills and expertise they need to thrive as entrepreneurs, in turn empowering them to better able to provide for themselves and their families. This creates knowledge transfer and employment opportunities for their community, too.”

Graduates from the programme receive a NQF level 4 Services Seta Accredited Youth Enterprise Development Certificate and the Intel Learn Easy Steps Digital Literacy Certificate, and an opportunity to participate in a six-month mentorship programme, which will provide them with additional business support while they start formal enterprises.

They also receive basic computer literacy skills taught by Siyafunda CTC, which provides information and training through community knowledge centres, where people are provided with access to computers to help them develop their digital skillset.

*This article was originally published on [Disrupt Africa](#).*

## ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem

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