Talking Tech for Good powered by the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in collaboration with Capacitate.

Episode 1-**"Harnessing the power of tech for a better world"**_Transcript

[00:00:00] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:00:00] Molweni bo. Good afternoon. Good morning. Good evening. Welcome to the Talking Tech For Good podcast series powered by the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in collaboration with Capacitate, we're passionate about helping you understand the possibilities of tech and social impact organization.

[00:00:19] Never have we had to adapt so quickly and this can be very overwhelming. We're here to have conversations, answer some pertinent questions and hopefully we can all move forward towards harnessing the power of tech for a better world.

[00:00:33] **Jason Bygate:** [00:00:33] Thanks for joining us for this first episode of the Talking Tech for Good podcast. I'm Jason Bygate Senior Partner, head of Technology and Data for Development at Capacitate. We're a social enterprise driving, social and economic change across Africa. Joining me as co-host of this podcast is the ever dynamic, Luvuyo Maseko head of youth innovation portfolio at the birth center.

[00:00:57] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:00:57] Thanks, Jason. Uh, I'm really happy. We, we [00:01:00] finally got here. It's, uh, I'm really looking forward to the next few episodes with you, and it's a great to be hosting this podcast as you, perhaps we can share with our listeners what got us started the podcast and the first.

[00:01:12] **Jason Bygate:** [00:01:12] Absolutely. I think that, um, the idea really is an extension of the conversations that we've been having between Capacitate and, and Bertha. Uh, um, since we first ran the webinar in Digital Transformation, I think it's become clear to us, uh, both from the stories that we're hearing from organizations on the ground, as well as the research that's being done. That civil society organizations are really at a significant disadvantage when it comes to leveraging technology effectively to improve and support the development outcomes that they're trying to achieve.

[00:01:47] It seemed to us that there was a consistent need for reliable and trusted advice to help organizations navigate the technological landscape and drive innovation.

[00:01:58] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:01:58] So true Jason [00:02:00] and from our end as well, we realize that there is, there's still a lot of fear that exists within the space when engaging in navigating the tech space.

[00:02:09] I, for one, at least before COVID hit us, um, was always somewhat excited, but a little bit apprehensive about incorporating tech more into our program. Um, similarly to conversations about the fourth industrial revolution, you know, it's exciting and coming, but

you're kind of comforted by the fact that it's coming like in a year or in the next two years and not necessarily today.

[00:02:32] And what COVID has done is that it's made this conversation and the implementation of technology is part of our everyday op operations. A lot more, um, on that the forefront of our mind. So the urgency with which organizations, especially in the youth development space are needing to transform and adapt is top of mind and priority right now.

[00:02:54] But, um, based on what you've seen, Jason, what do you think are some of the key challenges in the space and what are [00:03:00] the organizations and the individuals that you've interacted with been struggling with the most.

[00:03:05] **Jason Bygate:** [00:03:05] Thanks Luvuyo. I think really how I would characterize the approach toward technology is, is one of a blend of terror and confusion.

[00:03:15] I think certainly as organizations are under increasing pressure to find ways to deliver their programs and to use technology, to improve what they're doing, um, on the ground. There's I think a blend of, of, uh, confusion and fear, um, that places a lot of them on the backfoot. For the most part, the technology infrastructure and the skills within organizations are relatively limited and the systems are often quite dated.

[00:03:41] Those legacy systems and even paper-based processes are still very common. And I think largely that's due to three factors, um, that we're seeing within organizations, firstly, the budget limitations, um, that's is fairly consistent across the sector and almost all [00:04:00] organizations. Really tight financial constraints and there's seldom funding available to upgrade systems and get new equipment and provide training. And funders are often unwilling to fund those sorts of things. Secondly, I think that organizations are very focused on the social need and the delivering of programs to support beneficiaries and clients that need their needs. So there's limited time or energy to consider using technology to help innovate, to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

[00:04:34] Finally, I think that's, you don't really know what you don't know. So as an organization and a leadership or management within those organizations, they're really just not aware of the available technology for the organization. They're not really equipped to select and implement appropriate solution.

[00:04:54] And they don't have the time to consider the range of options that are available even to upskill to [00:05:00] know what they should be using or considering at the very least. So it makes it exceptionally difficult to try and navigate digital migration or any form of technological transformation.

[00:05:10] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:05:10] Thanks for that, Jason. Yeah. Through our experience, we found something similar. And I think maybe just a word here to the audience here is that we do appreciate that we're navigating this space. There's a lot of anxiety. Uh, we also don't pretend to have all the answers, but the hope is that we can work through some of the more challenging issues that your experience, so that we're all better equipped to deal with some of these issues.

[00:05:35] As I said, it really is our hope that this podcast series will help you to understand the opportunities offered by tech and also to make you feel more confident about how you navigate it.

[00:05:46] **Jason Bygate:** [00:05:46] Perhaps a good place to start is to look at the subject of e-learning. I'm sure that many of us are tired of hearing about the impact of COVID-19.

[00:05:55] But the reality is that the world has changed forever. And one of the sectors that has [00:06:00] been most effected by these shifts is certainly the education sector, as well as organizations that are working in the youth development space, delivering services to young people, to build their skills and capacity.

[00:06:11] All of a sudden learning needed to happen online and education, youth support programs had to make rapid shifts almost overnight. In this episodes feature story, we'll be diving into the topic. And later on in this episode, we'll also be taking some time to tackle your questions about other kinds of technology.

[00:06:34] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:06:34] I think a good place to start is to ask the question, what do we even mean by the term? E-learning is it simply teaching your content over Skype or a similar platform rather than being in a classroom? Is there more to it?.

[00:06:48] You're raising

[00:06:48] **Jason Bygate:** [00:06:48] a good point. And I think that often that's where many organizations are becoming unstuck. It's really important to understand that e-learning is not simply about taking existing content [00:07:00] and converting it to go online. It needs far more in-depth consideration in how it's approached and also understanding how one goes about creating good content and applying an appropriate platform. And also then looking at how one approaches the content design, um, and also understanding what's possible and considering the constraints that your learners, um, or even your teachers might be facing.

[00:07:29] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:07:29] I think that's a really good point. And for me, another thing that comes to mind is also taking more into consideration, the planning strategy and frameworks that need to be in place before one can even think about making e-learning a success. I don't want a bore and you want to too many stories, but I remember, uh, through a colleague of mine when she had done some research into the Red Cap Schools, Initiatives, One of the, the key things that, that, that, that came out of that research piece was that.

[00:08:00] [00:08:00] The school itself has to be ready, or this was in the space, the education space, but the organization or the school itself needs to be ready to take on technology. And what they've often did is that they dedicated a significant amount of work to working with the staff and the entire organization before even introducing the new technology.

[00:08:20] So let's not forget things like access and technological literacy, where we should also take into process the change management aspect of it.

[00:08:28] No doubt, this is a very complex topic and I'm excited to jump into some of the more practical aspects of it. We're really excited to be joined by Sukaina Walji from the Center for Innovation in learning and teaching.

[00:08:41] Sukaina joined us on a recent webinar and we're thrilled that you agreed to join us for the podcast welcomes Sukaina.

[00:08:49] Sukaina Walji : [00:08:49] Thank you very much. It's good to be here again.

[00:08:51] Jason Bygate: [00:08:51] Hi Sukaina, It's so great to be talking to you again, and I think really picking up on what Luvuyo was talking about previously. You can really [00:09:00] add a huge amount of value to this conversation. Um, in particular, as we start to look at the precursors to actually implementing an e-learning process or migrating content to a digital format. And I think to start off from your experience, what have you seen as some of the biggest challenges in the e-learning space as organizations are looking at a digital migration and especially those that haven't necessarily thought through the process of migration. Um, or we're just starting the process as Covid 19 hit us?.

[00:09:33] Sukaina Walji : [00:09:33] Yeah. Right. Um, I'll step back a little bit. Um, and just say that I've been working in the e-learning space for about 10 years or so. And I, if I reflect back on the changes during that time, I would say that it's been a slow and steady progress. And in terms of more people and organizations using, um, e-learning and digital technology for, for training.

[00:09:59] And [00:10:00] this applies both the corporate sector and the formal education sector, schools, colleges, and universities. I think some of the challenges first and foremost, and Luvuyo touched on it earlier is around familiarity. So people are familiar with teaching we're learning in face-to-face environments because that's the way that they were taught primarily.

[00:10:23] And some of our challenges, when we talk about digital migrational migration to e-learning is describing it. It's very difficult for people to imagine something that they haven't experienced. And that often means that they respond in ways that are negative or perhaps that they think that you should be able to do exactly the same things you can do in your face-to-face classroom, as you can in your digital environment.

[00:10:55] And both of those things, I think are social [00:11:00] challenges almost. Yeah. Quite apart from the practicals, isn't the technology, it's the mindset. And it's a belief. I think. So that's something that we should acknowledge when we introduced the concept of e-learning to people and organizations, that there is bound to be some level of unfamiliarity in everything that goes around it.

[00:11:21] Um, and as you said, this is. Then as much a change management, but it's also like a change belief management almost. So that's the first challenge I would say. So related to that is for people who want to go into this space now it's about developing the skills and the capacity to teach using e-learning methodologies and technologies.

[00:11:48] And because of this lack of familiarity and skills, um, the types of learning that people might've experienced online have probably been a little bit negative. Uh, maybe that's why we [00:12:00] often get people saying, but e-learning is so boring. It's it's distancing. I can't see my students. I don't know what they're doing.

[00:12:09] And so we have to try and understand those sentiments and then think about what are the types of skills and capacities we would need to put on the table, the

opportunity. That, um, e-learning offers that we move away from a deficit model where you're trying to replace something that was really great face-to-face and inevitably it won't be as good to something that says let's really look at what digital offers and what we could do that really uses characteristics of the space, the tools, the notion of flexibility and those kinds of things. So that's the challenge, I think, um, in terms of an educational challenge in itself that we have to accept e-learning on its own terms rather than trying to compare it, to replicate the [00:13:00] face-to-face environment.

[00:13:01] Another thing I think that is the challenge is. Th there's lots of variety in the types of e-learning designs that we can offer. There are lots of different words now to describe e-learning, you'll have heard of online learning or blended learning or hybrid learning or teaching with technology. And that really signals that there are many, many options here.

[00:13:21] There isn't one way of doing e-learning and again, that's, um, opening up the possibilities for people. Um, and then I'm going to move to practicalities and logistics. One of the very real challenges, um, is around internet device, connectivity and data. And we need to put that on the table right away, especially in our context.

[00:13:47] This is a major challenge, um, where there is unequal access. Um, many people. Um, especially in the youth sector, perhaps do not have the type of data connectivity, the persistent [00:14:00] data connectivity that would allow them to participate, say in high bandwidth, um, digital learning, or they might live in an area where connectivity is poor, um, or intermittent.

[00:14:10] And we have the joy of load shedding to contend with as well. So in designing, um, learning or even thinking about offering it and looking at the various, you know, business models, the needs and circumstances of your potential learners needs to be taken into consideration front and center. It doesn't mean you can't do it, but you have to accommodate, um, into the design, all of these, um, practical environmental considerations, and that's a huge challenge and it can be quite daunting and off-putting, um, if it's something that you're thinking about.

[00:14:46] **Jason Bygate:** [00:14:46] Yeah. And I think that you raise an important point. I think that for me, having seen organizations rapidly try to deploy systems to facilitate e-learning. The approach [00:15:00] that is characterized by never field of dreams approach. If you will, you know, if you build it, they will learn, um, is, is one that has caused a lot of heartache with organizations and certainly generated a lot of expense and wasted resourcing. Um, and certainly that the context of that learning makes a significant difference.

[00:15:24] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:15:24] Uh, thanks for that, Jason. And I'm sure you can all get a bit involved, gotten a better sense of why we're so excited to have Sukaina take part in this and it's not just her accent I promise where before I shoot a question over to her again, perhaps I've got one for Jason and Jason I hope you wouldn't expect him to just coast through the segment, but, uh, what are the key things you think that an organization needs to be thinking about when it comes to -learning?

[00:15:50] What is e-learning I guess also in your own experience, as you, as Sukainamentioned, different people have different sort of definitions for it and understanding for it.

[00:16:00] [00:16:00] **Jason Bygate:** [00:16:00] Thanks Luvuyo. I think really my understanding of the approach to e-learning and certainly changed since we had those first conversations with Sukaina, um, in particular, because we're often not thinking about the context that we're going to be, um, delivering, learning through or into. And there's very little planning that goes into considering an e-learning approach that is not just a replication of an existing program. So I think really the starting point has to be in planning and the strategy and the preparation for that learning process.

[00:16:43] And as Sukaina said, it's not simply about trying to replicate the in-person delivery, that we're all quite accustomed to. So certainly looking at, um, the, the process of providing that learning function, [00:17:00] um, should be the starting point. Um, if I'm not suitably chastized for throwing in terms like pedagogy and causing chaos and panic, um, certainly the, the way that we learn is, is really important to consider and the context and how we navigate constraints, uh, when it comes to connectivity and device access.

[00:17:24] Um, before we even start thinking about how we're compiling our content. And then how we're managing our content using systems that are available either a, our own learning management system or a hosted platform or service that we're using. So really there's, there's quite a lot of complexity to the process and the best way to start navigating that is through a detailed planning and strategy process.

[00:17:51] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:17:51] Hmm, I'm hearing come through really clearly from both of your inputs as context, context, context. Uh, I think that's something that if we [00:18:00] at least get one thing across over the next few episodes is that your context is, is should you should review things according to your own space and your own environment and not try, just copy and paste what you may have found, seen work in different contexts.

[00:18:14] Um, and now I have a question from one of my colleagues, Louise. So if our goal, which indeed it is, is to ensure that no learners left behind, how can we make sure that e-learning is as inclusive as possible? And maybe another part of that question is, is e-learning or technological platforms. Are they really the answer to reaching every child in the way that many people hope for it to be?

[00:18:38] **Sukaina Walji :** [00:18:38] So the question is, you know, how can we ensure,digital equity? Um, and I think we have to look at, come at this in a number of different ways. So first of all, as the provider, perhaps if you are providing the, the program or the training or the course, [00:19:00] then. First and foremost is to understand the circumstances of your potential learners.

[00:19:06] And that's by listening to them, by finding out very practically what they have access to, what they don't have access to, and then build the course around that. So it's the opposite of, um, you know, build it and they will learn. It's actually build it for the learners and we have many strategies around low bandwidth, low tech options, um, as opposed to very high end high bandwidth options, that's the straight choice that we can make when we design our, um, training and courses. Um, simple things, um, such as if you are going to produce content that is, um, video, um, that will be a problem for some people. And so.

[00:19:59] We should be [00:20:00] providing alternatives, such as notes, texts, and transcripts, or even really thinking whether we need that type of video at all. Um, other

options are, and really thinking about the circumstances under which, uh, our learners would be, um, participating. So if you're build into your course, Activities that enables flexibility.

[00:20:23] So rather than requiring people to log on at a certain time of the week at 10:00 AM for a one hour presentation that might not be possible for a large number of your people at that moment in time. The design might move towards a more asynchronous, flexible mode where you provide a series of activities perhaps for that week.

[00:20:50] And you ask learners to work through them. Um, at times that might suit them. And that might mean that that's when they have access to. [00:21:00] maybe they travel somewhere to a library, for example, and it's convenient. So there's a balance here between balancing the context of the learners, how you know, how they are experiencing and how they can, um, participate in your learning opportunity and how you design.

[00:21:18] So if you make it very stringent and very, um, time-based, then that will provide, you know, put up barriers for people. So that is what you can do at the level of the provider, which is about thinking, well, how can I best design this so that most people will be able to participate. And how can I design catch up sessions?

[00:21:40] If you do have a session that is perhaps a live session because they are, they are important. They bring people together in one space, make sure it's recorded. So that it's provided for people later or give one, two or three options so that people can join at a different time. If you're going to have interaction, [00:22:00] um, such as in like we're doing here, um, in, um, if we were having a zoom session, for example, with different people that you might offer a WhatsApp chat or a Twitter chat as well, which is lower bandwidth, um, a bit more flexible.

[00:22:16] So it's around looking at the different options and possibilities of, um, interaction and content delivery and matching them to the circumstances of most of your learners. But we also have to admit that, um, there is a basic level of, um, device and connectivity that is required. And I think we have to be honest about that.

[00:22:40] And so one of the other things I would say is if you're an organization and you have a design and you're offering learning opportunities that you. Are very upfront with the learners as to what will be required because what people don't like is surprises halfway through the course. So if you offer them and you say, this [00:23:00] is what will be required, then you're giving people the agency to make a plan.

[00:23:05] Um, and so, you know, and people do, they have remarkable, um, levels of, um, ingenuity and agency, and we're finding this in our space and they will try and make a plan, but. As the providers incumbent on you to give very good instruction, to be very honest and upfront about what is required and in some of our work, um, at UCT, uh, you know, we, in our courses, we encourage, um, the, the lectures to say to our students, if they're studying online, this is how long this will take you.

[00:23:37] This is what you will need. Um, so that people plan in advance. Um, and so you also giving them the opportunity to create their learning environment rather than you having to do everything. So those are some of the issues around equity. And then very quickly, I'll just add that beyond that we really have to motivate, um, from [00:24:00] policy point of

view, to extend things like zero rating to educational websites, um, the under the national state of disaster, um, situation.

[00:24:12] Access to, um, educational websites is, is data free. And w and those are the kinds of ways we need to lobby our governance structures, our politicians, to extend that, um, under the argument that education and educational content is a public good. And we need to be. Constantly thinking about that so that more and more people have access, um, in a, in an informal sense as well, as well as formal, and to continue to lobby, um, cellphone companies and the like to offer better, um, you know, data opportunities and data plans for educational content.

[00:24:51] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:24:51] I think you raised some really, really important questions. Sorry about that, Jason, um, uh, point rather than questions, particularly when you [00:25:00] mentioned around just being upfront about some of the commitments. I think sometimes when people. Are aware that there may be something that has to do with technology or computer.

[00:25:10] For example, people can be a little bit apprehensive. And if you're a little bit more clear up front about what it entails, I think that will, that will go quite a long way in, in easing people's fear around some of this. Um, and, and on the other point, particularly on the policy level in lobbying, uh, government to provide or to continue, what have they have been providing.

[00:25:31] Under the sort of national disaster act. I think that's, that's, that's a really important aspect of it as well. And I would encourage everyone listening as well, to just be more aware of these sort of initiatives happening within their space. Maybe Sukaina you can provide some sort of guidance where people can go sign a petition.

[00:25:49] I mean, that's how it starts initially. Um, and then yeah, that Jason, maybe over to you because I did rudly interrupt you there.

[00:25:57] **Jason Bygate:** [00:25:57] No, that's okay. [00:26:00] Yeah, your pearls of wisdom over mine. Um, I think also from our side, just in looking at the, the approach, absolutely. There's a huge amount of advocacy work that needs to happen.

[00:26:11] Um, and certainly it speaks to that, um, perpetuation of the digital divide that we see in so many different areas. Um, and I think one of the ways that we have to approach the. The fact of the digital divide is as pragmatically as possible and, and really operate on two fronts, firstly, in advocating for better access and more inclusivity when it comes to data and, um, devices and getting access to the internet.

[00:26:40] And the second is to look at how we can navigate the existing landscape while that advocacy is happening. Certainly there are a lot of technology options that are not necessarily high tech and in some cases, it's, it's looking at low tech solutions. Um, so things like radio and, um, and TV are still useful channels to [00:27:00] use.

[00:27:00] Um, although it does sacrifice the on demand capability and, and being able to asynchronously learn. There is also a lot of new technology that's coming out that allows for broadcast content that is localized in particular for, for rural areas. There are a number of, of

mechanisms to allow you to host local content and make that content available to a local community and then asynchronously update that content.

[00:27:31] So I think that there are a lot of options available. And one of the challenges that organizations have is in knowing what those options are and how to use the technology that is available to overcome some of these challenges while we're lobbying government for a more rigorous approach to inclusivity, when it comes to data.

[00:27:52] but before I head down, uh, another technological rabbit hole, just to bring us back on topic, um, a question for, [00:28:00] for you Sukainaand perhaps you can help to guide us in understanding some of the differences in approach to creating content for online learning. Um, and perhaps some suggestions as to some of the things to keep in mind when creating content for a particular program or particular um, learning group?

[00:28:22] **Sukaina Walji :** [00:28:22] Jason, I think before you think about content, you should think about your course design. Um, what sort of course, or experience will work for your learners. And once you have that in mind, I think it's easier to think about the content creation and then what sort of changes you might need to make, um, to your existing content.

[00:28:42] and ill give an example, uh, to, to, to show what I mean. Um, because just as there are so many ways of offering education in a face-to-face setting, um, you know, you have lectures or you have presentations or you have group work. Those are all choices you make. And [00:29:00] similarly in. Um, e-learning space. I think it's, uh, it's important to know what experience and what your general course approach is going to be first.

[00:29:10] So let's say you offering a course in a self- paced way. So this means you want students to perhaps log in and access the content by themselves and work through activities. We sometimes call this self paced or asynchronous. We mentioned that a bit earlier where you don't require your learners to be learning together at the same time.

[00:29:31] Um, so here, if that's what you're planning to do, you would want to offer your content in ways that help students navigate their way through your course and the activities. Um, and so you might think about short bite-size. Um, content, um, short videos, very clear instructions, infographics were notes that are sequenced together.

[00:29:54] And because you're not going to be there in a physical space guiding students. So your content [00:30:00] design and your online space needs to do that. Um, The human person being there. Um, so that's where you might think, okay, what do I need to do to my content to make sure it fits in this particular type of, um, sequenced mode?

[00:30:17] Um, the other thing about working online in this way is that people often find it very difficult to consume very large documents. Reading online is sometimes. Difficult. Um, um, and so if you want people to engage with a textbook or work book, you need to really think about how to present that in an online space.

[00:30:37] It might be that you might, um, chop it up into chapters, or you might flag which areas of a long text you might want people to look at rather than dumping the whole thing online. So those are the types of lessons that we're learning about what you do with your content. Um, if you're going to be reusing it.

[00:30:58] And if you're creating [00:31:00] new content, then it's about thinking, what do I need this content to do in the context of my course design? Where will it fit? And that's what I try and explain to people. Don't let your content lead your course design. Don't say, I've got this huge textbook. Now I need to have somehow deliver it.

[00:31:20] It's saying, what do I want my, my students to learn? And then what content will help them through this course in the way that I'm planning to teach it. Another example is if you're on the other hand, adding a course where you do require people to come together, um, in online spaces, um, in video conferencing, then you might have a different approach to your content.

[00:31:46] You might well have your content presented as, um, uh, very engaging presentation using slides and graphics and video inside the presentation. And then you might record that and share that later. [00:32:00] So that's a different way of thinking about your content. So you can see the contrast there, but what you might do in terms of planning your content, and then I'll finish with, um, two, two points around content creation, especially where it's, um, expensive and, um, where you are working with video. So video is becoming more and more important and ubiquitous in the online space. It often replaces, um, you know, people speaking with a video and it's, it's, you know, a fair enough, um, replacement, but it is expensive to make. And it, if you need such updates something quickly, then you're going to have to redo videos. So if you are going to go down that route, you need to have a plan for how you would update and refresh content. And my advice to people is don't worry so much about the video being very high-end production.

[00:32:57] Rather focus your energies on [00:33:00] helping people who are creating the course, make their own videos. You know, it's getting easier now, you know, the technologies are there to create very reasonable, uh, good quality DIY videos, yourself. It's a great skill to have. And it's something that I would rather say, invest that rather than, um, Get somebody else externally to create very high end videos, which then you have to go back to and, create a dependency.

[00:33:27] So that's, you know, an opportunity for capacity development because multimodal ways of communication are going to become increasingly important in the digital space as well as texts. So that's what I would say about, um, Thinking about content creation is also where you're moving into new types of media production is to invest in the skills of being able to produce your own. Um, and that's really, really, um, I think, you know, a great skill for people to have in any case. Um, if they're in that, in that field.

[00:33:59]**Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:33:59] And [00:34:00] an exciting point as well, if you were to develop some of that, those capabilities in-house as well, you could imagine a team or organization having quite a lot of fun with it. Um, something that you also mentioned with tonight, which puts me at ease. Cause I had been struggling with it myself. It's just consistently having to consuming, read a lot of these big documents online. It is, it is something that I think not a lot of us. So I quite appreciate. And I think particularly in things through content design, I'll just like to emphasize that point.

[00:34:31] That's Sukaina had. And then again, just on to my, onto my, onto my last question here, but, um, what are some of the particular challenges for youth? Uh, how do you think about how do we young people think about online learning differently from our own point of view, for example, through our own skills development program, we found that while young

people are technologically savvy, like using a phone and going to twitter. [00:35:00] And Instagram and Facebook is slightly, is very different from learning. And I, we found that there was a lot of encouragement and strong pushing and nudging that needed to be done to get them to be more comfortable.

[00:35:14] Um, I think a lot of it was just showing them that they can do it in there and that it's not this daunting thing to open up a computer, but I wonder in your experience, particularly through UCT, are there things that the youth have that the students have?

[00:35:28] Not that all students at UCT or youth, but, uh, have the things that students have struggled with specifically.

[00:35:35] Sukaina Walji : [00:35:35] So you're absolutely right. That although we think that young people might be already familiar with digital technologies and that they don't need, um, very much assistance, I think quite the opposite is true. Um, it's very different to learn online or, um, in a digital space, um, as opposed to being on social media. [00:36:00] Um, so at UCT, what we've found is when students come in, they need orientation and they need onboarding support. They need support with general digital literacies. We cannot assume that all students come in with the same social and cultural capital to be able to learn online in the same way people have different experiences of schooling and home environments. So onboarding orientation, um, getting people comfortable with the space and, you know, there's, there's very, you know, the very useful, you know, small tips that you can offer to make students comfortable icebreakers, um, low stakes type of activities.

[00:36:42] Don't put, you know, a high stakes assessment um, Before students have had the chance to try things out in the online environments. It's about making people feel comfortable. It's no different from somebody entering, um, at an organization or an [00:37:00] institution or a university for the first time. And you have to show them around. You have to tell them where the bathrooms are and where this is and where to go for food. And, you know, it's the same thing. You have to make people feel comfortable and exclude included, and part of the, um, part of the, the community of learners. And so that's really important. I think people often forget that and they go straight into the, here is what you need to learn and here's what you need to do.

[00:37:27] And it can feel quite alienating. And I think making people feel included and comforting. Um, is important. And then the, the other thing is, do not underestimate the amount of support that students will need, especially youth. Um, It's sometimes for reassurance it's sometimes that they know that if they get stuck with somebody, whether it's a technology issue or not understanding something, what they're supposed to do, that there is support on hand.

[00:37:58] That could be a WhatsApp [00:38:00] group, a telephone line, um, an email, um, but also again, make it completely clear up front. Where people can go when they need help. Just like you want to tell them how long it will take them to do this activity, what devices they will need. Be very upfront with the support that is available. That provides a huge safety blanket for people.

[00:38:23] They know that if they get stuck and they're working at a certain time, but also be honest, um, don't offer 24 7 support. If you can't offer 24 7 support. Most people, you know,

couldn't, um, it's a huge undertaking, but then tell people what your office hours are when the support will be available, how long it will take to respond to an email query, for example.

[00:38:48] So again, it's about, you know, kind of, you know, human. Human actions really to make, make it very clear, um, what will be available, but I think especially for [00:39:00] the youth youth sector, um, and to make sure, um, that we don't inadvertently leave some students behind to provide enough information and support as well as the good design principles that we've outlined.

[00:39:15] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:39:15] Yeah. Yeah. That makes a lot of sense. Thanks guys. That was a really, really interesting segment.

[00:39:21] **Jason Bygate:** [00:39:21] Thanks, Sukaina. It's so great to talk to you again, look forward to our next session. Well, I think that was quite a lot of food for thought and certainly from our perspective, not a lot of talk about tech. It's very confusing as a Talking Tech for good podcast.

[00:39:38] So just to note that we will start talking about the actual tech. We would be wanting to use when considering e-learning and learner management. But I think it was really important to have the sort of conversation with, um, a specialist like Sukaina as we're laying the foundations for approaching [00:40:00] something like e-learning, given that it's not a simple matter of developing content and deploying it through a system.

[00:40:07] In our next segment, we take some of your questions on tech and specifically on e-learning and migration . And we'll do our best to answer them

[00:40:16] **Voicenote:** [00:40:16] migrating. Um, programs to digital platforms requires the use of, um, uh, gadgets and devices, tablets, cell phones, laptops, and so forth. Could you just, um, highlight or share, where does Africa sit in terms of, uh, maybe combat zones in Africa and the world as far as affordability of data affordability of gadgets, uh, for, for, for, for learners, you know, from rural and township, uh, places.?

[00:40:49] Uh, my question is what's the difference between an e-learning platform and an LMS?

[00:40:57]**Jason Bygate:** [00:40:57] So the question about data and devices, [00:41:00] I think is one that is fairly consistent across organizations. And as we heard from Sukaina, one of the key considerations looking at the context into which we're delivering e-learning digital program. The data's quite varied in terms of the cost of, of, uh, devices and the cost of connectivity. Um, a number of reports have been generated. Generally South Africa is certainly one of the most expensive when it comes to data currently, or for some of the reports that I've seen.

[00:41:30] Um, I think it was 136 out of 195 countries. Our data is certainly expensive and there continues to be a significant barrier for access to content online and also other services on the internet when it comes to devices, we fare with better. We're certainly in the, the cheapest half of the, um, the classifications.

[00:41:54] So our devices are relatively reasonably priced. Um, I think the top [00:42:00] country is the likes of Singapore. interestingly enough. But we've said at the mid range of that scale, in terms of affordability, when it comes to devices. When considering the

difference between e-learning and learner management systems, um, again, there's, there are a number of different definitions and classifications for me and a management system is a little different from an e-learning platform, primarily as I would see it because a learning management system is something that's managed by an organization directly where you're responsible for the system, the content that's deployed through the system and also access to the system. For me, it's something that would be more in line with an e-learning platform would be something like U-demy or simply learn where there is a range of existing content. That's offered as a service as a subscription, rather than something that's curated directly by an [00:43:00] organization. But as I said, there are a range of different classifications and descriptions and definitions, and we'll certainly post that list of those or some links to those on the website, um, for you to go and have a look at.

[00:43:13] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:43:13] We've certainly covered a lot of ground in this episode. And as we've said a few times now, we really want to keep this podcast as practical as possible. So please feel free to send us your questions via WhatsApp. You can send us a message or voice note at at 0 7 6 3 9 7 2 9 8 1 that's 0 7 6 3 9 7 2 9 8 1. We'd love to hear from you.

[00:43:38] So what now? How do we move toward taking the next steps? In wrapping up this podcast we wanted to share a few practical tips on how to handle migration within your organization. It's easy to only think about the practical workings of technology. And we need to remember that this work is as much about finding the right technical solution for your organization, but from [00:44:00] our experience, it's also about the people involved in that transition.

[00:44:04] **Jason Bygate:** [00:44:04] Thanks Luvuyo . I think you raised some important points about the human element of digital migration. And it's important to remember a few things. Often people are scared of change and the unknown, you must remember to take the people in your organization, along for the ride. Rather take your time to bring all your people on board, then rush the process, getting there quicker, but having a relational mess on your hands. Another key thing to remember is that technology is a tool and it won't necessarily solve all of your problems. Especially if you're not doing the work, laying the foundations. Learn more about how the technology can get it to your specific needs.

[00:44:44] There really isn't a one size fits all approach when it comes to technology, you can find more helpful resources that techtalk.org.za. Please be sure to check out the show notes of this episode, to find out more about these and other resources.

[00:44:58] **Luvuyo Maseko:** [00:44:58] Thanks, Jason really well said, [00:45:00] and that's all the time we have for today folks in episode one of this pilot series. Thank you for joining us on the Talking Tech for Good podcast. Make sure you subscribe to this channel and share this episode with anyone you feel could benefit. The more we talk about tech and really understand its benefits. The more we can go about harnessing the power of tech for a better world.