

Talking Tech for Good Episode 4 - Adoption and change management-Transcript

[00:00:00] **Luvuyo Maseko:** Sanibonani! Molweni! Good morning! Welcome to **Talking Tech for Good** 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 in social impact organisations.

Never have we had to adapt so quickly and this can be overwhelming. We're here to have conversations, answer some pertinent questions and hopefully, we can all move towards *harnessing the power of tech for a better world*. Mr. Bygate, my partner in crime. How are you doing today?

[00:00:39] **Jason Bygate:** Uh, honorable president in waiting, I'm exceptionally good today and very fired up about the session with our guests. Really looking forward to unpacking some of the interesting things about technology adoption and how organizations are trying to solve problems. So I'm exceptionally well. I trust you are in good form this morning.

[00:00:57] **Luvuyo Maseko:** Oh, I am as well and I'm going to try find a way to weave 'exceptional' into the rest of this podcast as much as possible cause I'm feeling it. So let's get this hopefully exceptional conversation started.

[00:01:11] **Jason Bygate:** Well, I'm glad you started on that note because I think it was Plato who said that "all human behaviour flows from three main sources: desire, emotion and knowledge". And today we're going to be taking a look at the topic of adoption and change management. I think it's easy to forget that technology can only be useful when it is implemented and implemented well. And this really is about people and how they interact with and embrace change. And perhaps most important is understanding *why* this process of change and adaptation and adoption is really necessary when it comes to technology and managing a process of digital migration.

[00:02:18] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I mean, look at you starting the podcast with a quote from Plato. Kudos to you.

[00:02:23] **Jason Bygate:** I think just to lower the tone and manage expectations. Um, I think it was Pinky and the Brain that said, "FJORD!"

[00:02:36] **Luvuyo Maseko:** Okay. Just in case our listeners are wondering what the hell is going on here. Um, today's theme in podcast episode is around adoption and change management. And within the development space, which one could argue always doesn't embrace change. This can be a really complex thing. Sometimes organizations want to evolve and grow, but there simply isn't funding for it, or else there is a lack of 'know-how' and specific expertise. Sometimes the resistance lies in the fact that change is often difficult and requires a lot from people involved. The

last two years, um, have, have given us a real everyday understanding of just how difficult change could be, can be these people, uh, uh, balancing working with working from home, uh, supporting their kids. So I think we're all in the space of understanding just how difficult change could be.

[00:03:41] **Jason Bygate:** Couldn't agree more. I think that that process of change is a really difficult one. Um, and I think certainly as, um, The development sector as a whole, there, there is some, some real reluctance to embrace their change. And that goes back to a whole range of factors that influence the ability of organizations to change and to adapt and definitely to innovate. Some of it is off of a back of a dysfunctional or toxic approach to social investment where funders are really disconnected from the elements that drive innovation and impact at scale. Before we even get to the functions of adoption within organizations. So for me, it's, it's really about firstly acquisition, as you said, sometimes the money can solve problems, um, but definitely the process of adoption and how you can drive usage by organizations, whether it be internal team members or the actual beneficiaries or users themselves. So from my side, it's, it's a really interesting subject matter and I'm certainly looking forward to getting some firsthand experience from the guests that are coming on later, but you're working actively in the youth development space, Luvuyo. What have, what have your impressions been, um, in terms of the process of acquiring and adopting technology?

[00:05:10] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I think even outside of just the youth development space, change is something that, that I think most people aren't always too open to, to engaging in. Um, and, and I think I was listening to another podcast the other day. Look at me, 'Podcast man,' part of what they were saying is that is that change is an everyday thing. It's an it's in the small, um, small, everyday small steps that you take that, that, that, that lead to a wider change. So, and the same can be, I think, applied to the youth development space. So to not even though we're a lot of us are seeking these massive, large scale changes, and we're trying to address challenges like youth unemployment or low levels of educations and skills and literacy. To achieve that and to get to that end goal, it's in the everyday things that we need to do. And, and it takes a while for something to become habit. And I think sometimes some of the issues, and this is from a staff and organizational point of view is that I don't think we are appreciative of just how long change is and what is fully required for us to be able to be that change that we'd also like to see in some of the people that we work with. I, but I can, I can talk about this for a while and I, I really would like to, to jump into a little bit more of what we have planned today. The thing to remember is that we're definitely not trying to create enemies here, but I think we do need to acknowledge the very real and multi-layered challenges present in this space and the things that are keeping us from fully embracing and making the most use of the benefits available to us in what's also been dubbed the digital economy. We owe it to ourselves and to the many beneficiaries and lives that are impacted if we don't.

[00:06:56] **Jason Bygate:** Yeah, absolutely Luvuyo. I think really that, that digital divide just keeps playing out again and again, and all of these conversations that we're having. And I think that's one of the consistent threads going back to our previous podcasts. If we look at our discussion around that, um, connectivity. And the digital divide that exists on the ground with young people not being able to access services, not being able to afford data. Um, and certainly at an organizational level where organizations are being hamstrung by the funders that, um, are enforcing a,

an approach that is focused only on project funding, um, with, with no funding allocated to infrastructure, um, and certainly no funding allocated to, uh, flexibility for failure, um, in particular where it comes to technology. So definitely there is an enormous backlog when it comes to the infrastructure that's required to drive change through technology, as well as the skills that are needed to, to drive that entry into the digital economy. Um, and although it's not just about connecting. Um, it, it is very much, um, a feature and, uh, an element that plays into being able to manage a digital migration along with the infrastructure needed. Um, but we also want to make sure that the technology is being used in the best possible way to support social impact and to drive positive change and in order for that to happen, we have to have, in addition to acquisition, we've gotta be able to acquire technology that we need. We need to make sure that it's adopted and used in the best possible way. Um, and also that it's, it reflects the context in which we're working.

[00:08:40] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I think I'd also just like to say as well that the appetite and the appreciation for a change needing to happen does exist within the NGO space, particularly the youth development space. There are a lot of people who are, who are so interested and open to try new ways of doing things. It's just that, I think the thing about the unknown, we don't quite know what these changes will lead to is a little bit of a hindrance in the way people think through things. So I, I think. Some of the things that we also try and do, and unfortunately it's a consequence of just the conversations we have is that we're very quick to label the challenges. And I think it's also important to say that some of the enabling things within the ecosystem, particularly youth development spaces, that people are willing and ready now, at least to start having the conversation around change, which I think can only lead to more generative, beneficial conversations going with. On that note, I'd like to introduce our guests for today. We've got Abigail Sellman from ideas42, an organisation creating social impact through using behavioural insights to help people act on choices that affect their lives and communities and Melvina Phillips, the personal development facilitator at the Raymond Ackerman Academy of Entrepreneurial Development also based at the UCT Graduate School of business. RAA is a 6-month entrepreneurial development programme for young people between the ages of 18 - 35 who have had limited opportunity to access tertiary education. Welcome guys. We're really excited to have you on the show, how you guys doing today?

Abigail Sellman: Doing well! Thanks Luvuyo.

Melvina Phillips: Great. Thank you Luvuyo.

Luvuyo Maseko: Great. Really great to have you.

[00:10:24] **Jason Bygate:** Yeah, welcome guys. Um, I was, uh, was privileged to participate in the Civic Tech Africa conference, where I actually got to meet, um, Abigail on one of the sessions. So it was great to understand a little bit more about what your organization does. And, um, perhaps you can tell us a little bit more about how Ideas 42 and, um, what was the thinking behind starting the venture?

[00:10:48] **Abigail Sellman:** Yeah, sure Jason. Thanks so much. It was wonderful to me, you at the conference too, and I'm so glad to be back speaking with you again. Um, so Ideas 42 is a nonprofit behavioral design lab. And what we do is we look for deep insights into human behavior: Why people do what they do. And then

use that knowledge to help improve lives, build better systems and to drive social change. So. We were started about 10 years ago by a group of academics based at Harvard University in the US who wanted to take insights from academic research in the behavioral sciences and apply them to social problems in the real world. And since we started, we've grown to over a hundred staff working in 50 countries and we work on topics as diverse as, 'Early childhood education' to public health, cash transfers, um, sort of all the social impact space domains, and there's various ways we work. But primarily what we do is we help organizations and governments create better products and policies that can be scaled for maximum impact. Um, we also teach others about our methods striving to generate impact by facilitating the application of behavioral science by others. Um, and then we also have, um, an exciting new venture called the Ideas 42 Venture Studio, where we support social entrepreneurs to build businesses, to tackle problems of poverty, um, with behavioral design at the core of their products.

[00:12:16] **Jason Bygate:** Fantastic. I can't wait to dig into some of those areas as we're talking about adoption and implementation within the south African context.

[00:12:24] **Luvuyo Maseko:** and, Melvina maybe over to you now. Can you tell us a little bit more about the work at RAA and your role and the changes that you guys have had to go through over the last year and a half, I guess, or even two years now? In terms of moving online.

[00:12:39] **Melvina Phillips:** Yeah, sure. Thanks Luvuyo. So I'm really registered with the health professions counselors at a registered counselor and my responsibility at the RAA obviously entails, um, developing our students personally. And so obviously we, I work on the emotional side and the mental side and the RAA is really about developing entrepreneurial minds it's but also, um, changing mindsets, you know, from negative thinking into how positive thinking can actually change the trajectory of people's lives. Um, so with that being said, I think obviously migrating from the face-to-face learning to online learning, there was a lot of development that went into that. Um, one thing that really stood out for me was that as we are an entrepreneurial academy, we focus a lot on developing resilience, agility, adaptability, and flexibility. Oftentimes these are concepts that are so difficult to measure, but the transition from the contact learning to online learning made it so observable and so, in your face that you couldn't deny the students resilience you know, and the ability of our students to adapt and to be flexible with the migration process. So some of the challenges, obviously that we do encounter. Um, or network issues. Um, one thing that the online learning space has enabled us to do is, is to accept learners from outside of the Western Cape, outside of Cape Town, onto the program. So that's been a great growth point for us.

[00:14:23] **Jason Bygate:** Thanks. Malvina I think it's really interesting to start to look at how organizations are managing that migration effectively, and also the double-edged sword of that migration. In particular, the way that it can certainly add scale to interventions, but also some of the challenges in that need to be navigated and driving adoption and usage. Um, and also some of the other benefits that you can get out of that digital migration beyond the scale, just in the visibility that technology can provide, um, in giving you an immediate view of, of how you're progressing.

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[00:15:00] **Luvuyo Maseko:** And, just to piggyback off Jason's point, Alvina you mentioned in your intro that part of your work revolves around personal development of the students. And I'd like to know a little bit more about that. How have you guys gone about creating safe enough spaces online that allow for young people to develop that resilience that you speak of? Has there been a lot of change that you guys have had to go through as a staff?

[00:15:25] **Melvina Phillips:** for me personally, being the one offering the service, um, I think it was a few years ago, um, where there was an exploitation of psychologists moving to an online platform. And I was like, no way, this is not possible. You know? Uh, but obviously with the move and the transition from the contact learning to online learning, I've had to adapt myself and surprisingly at work that very well. So obviously you want to create a safe space for individuals and enable to engage with the emotional material that they bring to these sessions. So some of the practical things that I do via zoom is you create either a link for each individual, or you also have the option of admitting people into the room. So that's made it a lot easier. And I think with that privacy still, and that confidentiality still being maintained and actually enables people to still talk as much and share as much as they would like within these sessions. Um, I do note that there wasn't much of a change from the face-to-face learning to the online platform in terms of how much, uh, individuals are prepared to share. I think one thing that has made it a bit difficult is the accessibility. So in a perfect and in an ideal world, on campus when students were there it was easier for me to access them. Whereas now we have certain challenges, like whether these, whether they have data where there's access to wifi, where they are at and also just if they are available in that particular time frame, because we realize that our students are going through so much, um, they have also had to navigate their way through the pandemic. Family members, losing jobs. So as you mentioned previously in the introduction to who RAA is, um, we are basically an outreach program of UCT and so the students that we service are a very different type of student, you know, and so catering to the needs of that particular student that becomes challenging because you realize that family members don't have access to resources, like a simple cell phone. Um, some of them have, um, those mobi cells that don't enable them to be on a zoom at all times and so it's looking at ways of adapting and how we support these students.

[00:17:57] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I think one of the things that Melvina mentioned, and I think it's important to touch on is that at first she had thought that the changes wouldn't make sense and wouldn't be conducive to the type of impact they're looking to get. But once she had done them, particularly moving the sessions online, she found that it was okay. And I think some of the thing was change. This is me being a little bit preachy here, is that it's always a lot more scarier before we do it. But as soon as we do it, we look back like, oh, that went really well didn't it?

[00:18:24] **Jason Bygate:** Yeah, I think we can certainly bring in, bring an Abigail as the resident expert in terms of the behavioral component. I think for me, just that our dear old friend of the digital divide rearing its ugly head again, just reinforcing those barriers in terms of access and being able to manage that migration. Um, and I think the issue of safety and privacy is certainly one that we want to pick up in later episodes. As organizations are having to navigate the protection of information and also keeping young people in particular safe while navigating this new online journey. But I'd like to, to ask, um, Abigail to weigh in just in starting to unpack some of

the behavioral components that are linked to the adoption and utilization that is necessary when looking at a migration journey.

[00:19:15] **Abigail Sellman:** Yeah. Sure. Thanks, Jason. And just to build off the previous point that Melvina and Luvuyo made about, you know, People are first resistant to change and then when change happens, they realize maybe it's not as scary as they thought it was. And that really touches on, um, a key behavioral bias or tendency that I think is at play during migration and adoption, which affects us all which is called 'Status quo bias'. And it's just the bias that we all, as people prefer that things stay as they are over change. And it's a human tendency. So in designing new technologies and trying to facilitate adoption, I think we want to try to think about how can we mitigate status quo bias? How can we generate a sense of excitement around new technologies or help show people that new technologies will actually make their lives easier or integrate them with existing processes. So as, as to, um, make the change seem as small and painless as possible.

[00:20:14] **Jason Bygate:** Thanks Abigail. Well, I think it's, that's that factor of inertia is, is one that really is quite prevalent across the development sector. Um, organizations being trapped in that status quo, as you mentioned, um, for me, the, the primary reference when it comes to looking at adoption and, you know, we've, we've built out a number of systems in the past is that balance between, um, driving in new capabilities that can improve efficiency and effectiveness, but making them firstly, easy to use. Um, and certainly driving the understanding of the perceived usefulness, um, in my reference points are a bit dated because they refer back to technology acceptance models and, um, universal theories of adoption and usage. Um, but certainly I think that as a sector, we do have, um, a lot of inertia around change generally, and certainly some resistance to technology, um, that goes back beyond just the function of the technology itself, but also into things like access to funding, to be able to acquire those technologies in the first place. So I think that from my perspective, there is kind of a double barrier firstly, in the acquisition of technology, which is largely funder driven, and then the breaking that, that notion. If you build it, they will use it. Cause often there's, there's a, there's a disconnect. We've built it - why isn't everyone using it? And I think it's also navigating their process of adoption and use that that many organizations forget about. Um, but from your perspective, what would you see some of the biggest issues being in terms of that, um, adoption and use of technology, Abigail?

[00:21:58] **Abigail Sellman:** Jason, you hit my point right on the head. One of the biggest barriers is that we sort of as developers or designers sometimes have this assumption that if, if we built it, they will use it. And also, I think we also have an assumption that if it's user friendly and has socially minded, um, agenda, then it will be enough to inspire users to act, which also isn't true. So I think really to create impactful technology that people use as intended. We need to spend more time thinking about the context and environments that our end-users are in and, and in this case, you know, thinking about what is the context that the students are in, what do they have access to? Um, what are all the decisions they need to make to engage with the technology as it's intended and what might stand in the way of them following through on those decisions? So behavioral science. Tries to think about the context that people live in and make decisions and, and include that in the design and development of new products and technologies.

[00:22:57] **Jason Bygate:** I think that's really a key feature and certainly I think that's one of the things that Melvina and the team had at Raymond Ackerman Academy have done is that understanding of context. Um, we've certainly made the mistake before - Thinking that we understand the context really well, and then having deployed technology to have it be broken and abused and thrown away. So I think there's, definitely a function of, of context. Um, and I think Luvuyo you've got a really good understanding that you apply from a, um, a Birtha Center perspective and, and understanding that context in particular, where it comes to young people.

[00:23:37] **Luvuyo Maseko:** Yeah, Jason. I mean, it's something that, that is, that is very important to the work we do. I think sometimes particularly those of us who come from a varsity academic background, I mean, our organization is at the graduate school of business, they can be this idea that, build it and they will come and, and, and we have the answer sitting within these spaces because we have a wider academic-y understanding of the social problems. So you don't feel like it's important or you, you neglect including the end user as part of the design, right? And I think that's where the team, as you mentioned, that RAA are so great is that they consistently think through and understand the context. And it's also important to have someone I know is part of the team.

They also have Nariman who came through the RAA program as well. And I think that's really important, but I mean, on the topic of innovation, So, I mean, it's in our title, uh, and it can be a little bit of a buzzword, particularly in the youth development space. And so often in reality, there are roadblocks to being truly innovative. So for example, the idea of failing forward is not always embraced. Like we like to say we're open to failing and things along those lines, but we often aren't. And in, in terms of the practice, we don't see that coming alive. So maybe we can ask both of you and I'll start with you, Mel. Uh, how have you seen this word playing out in your work? This, this concept of not being open to failing forward and how do you think things could improve or change?

[00:25:10] **Melvina Phillips:** So this is such a brilliant question and I'm so fired up for it, right! So obviously our students come from contexts where failure and hopelessness is surrounding them on a daily basis, you know. So if they, they, they often have, they don't really have much hope for making a success. And so even if they fail, it's accepted, you know. There's not much question to it, but at the RAA we obviously challenge these mindsets. And one example, I would just like to reflect on that we do, we reflect on that bean activity. I'm not sure if any of you remember the bean activity that we did at school, where you would moisten it in the cotton wool.

[00:25:52] **Jason Bygate:** I think I killed many vegetables in that period. You can, you can see that I'm not afraid to fail.

[00:26:00] **Melvina Phillips:** So, so the idea is that you obviously expose the bean in the moistened cotton wool to some sunlight and there's a process that takes, you know, the growing process that takes place. Um, so often make the analogy that context, obviously an environment does matter, but oftentimes our students aren't able to geographically relocate and remove themselves from the environment, but obviously in your mind, and psychologically you are able to relocate and separate your thinking and change your thinking. So that's one of the examples that we often reflect on. And something powerful that happened for me this year was our first on-

line entrepreneurship conference, where we had 17 of our alumni come and showcase their businesses. And what stood out that our current cohort was in attendance of the conference and they spoke about the credibility that those individuals and those entrepreneurs, I mean RAA has been around for 16 years now. So those individuals, entrepreneurs basically gave credibility to the program. And that is also a source of hope and a source of transition in the thinking of our young people that we can make a difference, um, that our lives, you know, that if they came from this program, that this is where we could end up one day. And so it's about the process of who they are becoming. It's not who I am right now, but I mean, a process of becoming. With regards to considering, uh, the end user. Oftentimes we can approach the situation with some form of insensitivity. And it's not intentional. It's not deliberate because we really want the best for our young people and for the youth of South Africa. One word that stood out for me this year, um, with my research and with my studies was 'co-creating', you know, and with our young people. So the transition, um, I think that's the next question. What are the things that really assisted us with the transition from the face-to-face teaching to the online platform? Was we did a survey last year with our students who were the first ones to do the asynchronous teaching. So it was no synchronous teaching. It was just the asynchronous and it was really difficult for them at times to navigate. So we did a survey with the lectures and with the students because they are the end users. Um, and they gave us such valuable insight and, um, into how we approached, um, teaching and learning this year. Um, considering that it was still going to be online and what amazing insights had it enabled us to, uh, for there to be continuity to the program as if we were, um, in class.

[00:28:52] **Luvuyo Maseko:** That sounds, that just sounds like just such a brilliant way to do it. And as you say, everything is just consistently underpinned by the end user through every step of the way.

[00:29:04] **Jason Bygate:** Yeah, thanks Luvuyo. I think one of the questions that I had was around that last point that Melvina made around continuity. So as you're, as you're engaging, how do you maintain that continuity? And I'm sure that there must be a, a key role for that function of continuity and, and being able to maintain an open dialogue through the learning process. Um, and I just wondered perhaps from Abigail's side, what sort of role that plays in ensuring that the outcomes that you're after can be achieved as you're either migrating fully into a digital engagement or managing a hybrid, um, delivery of your program.

[00:29:42] **Abigail Sellman:** Yeah, sure. Jason, I can try to tackle that question. So I think the point about continuity being important in making a transition as easy as possible. Again, goes back to the bias I was speaking about before, where people are resistant to change, but there's also so many other things in the context that we need to think about and account for when, um, when we're developing something and trying to get it adopted. Um, but I think to a point I wanted to make, which ties back to Melvina's point about engaging the end user and making sure that they have. Uh, active participation and coming up with what the answers and solutions are. And Luvuyo made a point before, too, about, you know, sometimes in this space and this development sector, we sort of have this assumption that we might have the answer. We have an idea for an innovation that could have an impact, but I think to foster real innovation that has an impact in that can be implemented and adopted. Definitely to involve the end user as moodiness stated. And that's a big part of our process, but I think even about stepping back a step further is I think

we need to first strip back our assumptions that we know what the problem is and why it's a problem and what the solution should be. Um, and I think we work with partners and funders, and I think we always hear, you know, everyone wants to innovate. Everyone wants to solve a problem, but oftentimes these partners and funders also have some idea in mind about what the problem is or what the solution should be even before understanding it from the context of the end user. So I think really trying to, to strip back those assumptions and also not be afraid of failing, but also, you know, not being afraid of having an open-minded starting from a blank state where you're saying, you know, I don't know the problem and I don't know what the answer is. And developing solutions, you know, once you learn more from the end user,

[00:31:36] **Jason Bygate:** there we have a key points that I I'd certainly like to dig into a bit. That top down approach, in particular where funders think that they have an idea of how the problem should be solved. Um, but I think that that factor of bias is one that extends at all levels. So certainly, you know, as a, as a service provider and a partner in providing solutions, we definitely have that sort of bias where we think we know what is best. Funders have a view of what they think is best and even end users, I think have a perspective of what they think will work for them. And I think it's, it's really important to be able to blend those perspectives, to come out with the best possible solution that reflects context, and also can meet the specific requirements of that context in providing a solution. I think definitely that function of, of bias and, and being aware of the fact that it exists is, is very much a starting point, um, for, for any kind of solution process or design process.

[00:32:43] **Luvuyo Maseko:** So right, Jason, and I'm just so happy to have both Melvina and Abigail in today. I feel like at the end of every one of their answers, we just need to have a mic drop moment because they really just been hitting the nail on the head. I think perhaps in the next season, we need to think about incorporating some sort of mic drops sound every time someone says something that is just that it's just so on the money and exactly what we want to hear, but, but in wrapping up, um, and everyone actually has alluded to funders and maybe directly asking you guys Mel & Abigail. Can you tell us how open your funders have been to change along this process and how important is getting funders on board and open to changing the way that they think change should happen?

[00:33:28] **Abigail Sellman:** Yeah. So I guess, like I said before, I think in theory, everyone sort of says they're open to change, but in reality, what does that mean? And as, as I mentioned, you know, people are open to change, but have some idea what that change might look like. Or, you know, people are open to change, but are really caught up in an idea about how that change should happen. And I think our job as behavioral scientists, is not only to help the change happen in a way that resonates with end-users and can have impact, but also show funders and partners and everyone who's working in this space, including ourselves, cause we need to remind ourselves constantly, you know, what is getting in the way of, uh, facilitating this change, like these biases I'm speaking about. Some of the most impactful work that I think that we do is isn't so much the project work, but it's also just helping to teach people about behavioral science and shift that mindset in the sector in general.

[00:34:24] **Luvuyo Maseko:** And from your end, Mel?

[00:34:26] **Melvina Phillips:** Thank you Luvuyo. I think for us, it goes back to autonomy and that transparency and a constant open dialogue between ourselves and the funders. So we have direct access and the communication is open. And we obviously, like you mentioned earlier, Nariman Africa, who is our administrator. She's been, uh, she's an alumnus of the program. So the funders often appreciate the context that we are able to provide them with and so they definitely give us that freedom and that autonomy to make the best decisions for our students.

[00:35:05] **Jason Bygate:** I think you definitely are quite fortunate in terms of the funder that you, that you have. Um, in, in my experience, I think it's, it's quite rare to have a funder that is willing to accept and trust the implementation. Um, Which is also why I think it's important that they play a role in the process of designing solutions so that they have a better understanding of the context. Um, I think from, from my side, the point, one of the points that I wanted to raise was, um, in terms of the role of the funder in providing, um, that fertile soil for, for growing innovation, I think it's, it's really about, um, how constraining they, they, they can be in determining how funding is used. Um, and then this goes back to that notion of accepting failure or embracing failure so that you can fail forward in particular because this process of digital migration is, is fraught with, um, with, uh, a whole range of, of barriers and pitfalls for organizations that are trying to navigate it. I think there really is a need for, for funders to adapt their funding approach and to encourage organizations, to try new things within reason, of course, uh, given that we have limited resources to start with, uh, but certainly there's a need to drive a more, um, adaptable approach to investment, um, an approach that encourages the function of innovation and allows organizations to firstly, build up the infrastructure that they need in order to innovate, to build the skills that they need to innovate. And then also, um, accommodate the function of, of a suitable design process. And then also the change management that's necessary to be able to implement any kind of intimate innovation effectively. I'm sure Abigail's got, um, a whole wealth of experience in navigating that sort of landscape. Um, Abigail, what is, what has your experience been in terms of navigating that process? And do you have any advice for organizations that are looking to make that digital migration and also driving.

[00:37:26] **Abigail Sellman:** I guess any advice for organizations that are struggling with digital migration and adoption, just to sort of hammer home two of the points I made before is that we really just need to think more about the context in which individuals are making decisions and taking actions in their transition to using this specific technology, um, so that we can really ensure that we're helping them overcome all of the barriers to adoption that exist.

[00:37:53] **Jason Bygate:** Thanks Abigail. Luvuyo, I'm sure you've got some, some, uh, pearls of wisdom to spread through the conversation on that point.

[00:38:01] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I would really love to hear Melvina's advice to organizations as well, because the thing for me, the things that have stood out are context, context, context, and that actually funders also need to have a role to play in changing and shaping and driving impact within the space. Guys need to get their act together and stop being so forceful in terms of what they want to see in how they want to see things done. But I'll hand over to, to, to our resident expert, uh, Melvina in closing off any advice that you have.

[00:38:34] **Melvina Phillips:** I'm going to start off with Einstein's definition of insanity. Uh, he described it as doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. So we have to be forward thinking otherwise we are going to be left behind. We need to remain relevant, you know, so it's important for us to be forward thinkers.

[00:38:54] **Luvuyo Maseko:** It's worth it indeed. And I don't know if we can, we can end off on a better note than that, that the change you put in is really worth it at the end of the day. Thank you so much once again to our two guests. I mean, that was just such a great guest segment and really, really, really a lot of food for thought within that conversation. So, so I guess the question I have now is, so what now, Jason, um, maybe if I can direct a question to you, what, what would you say are the most important things for our listeners and organizations in the development space to consider when it comes to the adoption of technology and specifically in managing the change that is required within digital migration, I saved the toughest question for you here,

[00:39:39] **Jason Bygate:** And that why I'll try not to make complete fluff of it. Um, but I think really the, the, the theme, that's just, just so consistent across this podcast. And certainly some of the previous ones is, um, you know, if, if you build it, they will use it. Uh, that that fantasy is one that's been proven wrong in pretty much all of the episodes that we've had the discussion around, uh, organizations adopting and, and trying to access technology, um, that there is a wealth of evidence to show that there's a lot of work that needs to happen before you even start looking at a technology. Going back to the episode with Sakana around preparation of, of your content and, and spending time on the design and understanding the approach to learning. Um, I think the comments by Abigail also reinforcing the need for a design process and starting with understanding the current into which you're looking to deploy a technology solution and context, both from an end user where you're working with young people that have limited access to connectivity and, and technology itself, but also from an internal perspective, what are the barriers to your own team adopting and using the technology that you're wanting to roll out? There's, there's a lot of complexity and we need to give some thought to how we approach the process of digital migration and looking at definitely the context, getting as many voices in the room to guide the design process. And when we do get to the technology, ensuring that it is, um, firstly, relevant and appropriate to the context that we're working in, but then is, is going to add value to the programs that we want to deliver and the, um, the change that we want to drive and then probably most importantly, when it comes to the actual development and design of that technology itself is making sure that it's easy to use. Um, and then I think also important to recognize bias. Um, certainly I'm, I'm, uh, I'm someone that is, has definitely been subject to and, uh, has been fallen prey to my own biases in trying to design solutions that I think are the best ones, but I'm actually aren't because I'm not considering the end user. So I think really that the best way to manage that bias is, is really to get as much input as you can and, and their function of, of collaborative design and, and also involving as many participants as possible as the best way to manage, um, manage bias and to get the best possible design as you're planning a process of digital migration or implementing technology, but from your side Luvuyo in looking at the bigger picture vision of the youth development sector and how it's evolving. How would you see the sector changing over time when it comes to implementing technology and applying innovation in the way that we're trying to drive this, this massive, massive change that we need to address youth unemployment. I mean, the stats this week were just increasingly terrifying.

[00:43:01] **Luvuyo Maseko:** I mean, Jason, that, that is such a great question. Quite frankly, it's a little bit overwhelming because I don't exactly know the clear answer to that. But what I do know is that if change is to be achieved, particularly if we are looking to change these wide-scale social issues, such as unemployment and youth unemployment, more specifically a collective approach is required. One of the things that we try preach through all our work in the Bertha center is this idea of systems thinking and at its heart, if you think of a system as a set of interconnected parts, um, working coherently together to achieve something, what we try and do is find coherency within the system so that those parts can sing together and we can move all towards achieving some form of impact. So, and I think when you view technology, technology is one of those things that we can apply that can look to address, um, some of the geographical issues that we experienced so that we're able to reach more beneficiaries. And it also allows us to improve the way that we have set up our systems. So there's backend and front end things. And one of the things I've enjoyed so much about learning and working with you over the last four episodes are all the different ways in which we can work towards improving our delivery with regards to tech. So I think. I'm really excited and thinking through, I am both overwhelmed, but I'm overwhelmed and excited. I'm overwhelmingly excited if, if, if, if that makes any sense about what can really be achieved. So, so, so I think one of the things, and one of the entry points in, in the short-term is to get involved in the YD Collab. Again, we made reference to the YD Collab before. But that is an entity looking to build collaboration across the youth development space. The only way that conversations can be improved upon is if that we all learn a lot more from each other. And I think that lies at the heart of, of, of changing some of the issues that we're currently dealing and experiencing.

And that's all we have time for today. Thank you so much for joining us in the Talking Tech For Good podcast. Make sure you subscribe to this channel and share this episode with anyone who 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.