# the
# Singapore
## WAY

## USE CASE

# Unity by Platform

# Unity by Platform: A Digital Tool for Racial and Social Integration

## 1. Context Snapshot – A Captivating Story

- City Name: Johannesburg
- Country: South Africa
- Population: 5.6 million
- Year of Launch: 2024

Johannesburg is no stranger to diversity—or division. In a city shaped by migration, apartheid legacies, and economic inequalities, the fault lines of race, class, and nationality still run deep. Schools are more integrated than ever, but neighborhoods remain segregated. Public discourse is vibrant but often polarized. Government outreach efforts struggled to gain traction with the youth, and civic trust was eroding.

Minister Thabo Ngobeni, tasked with Social Cohesion and Digital Affairs, believed the solution lay not in more messaging, but in meaningful connection. Inspired by Singapore's multiracialism model—where integration was proactively engineered through housing, education, and digital feedback loops—he envisioned something new: a platform that doesn't just monitor diversity, but builds it.

Enter UbuntuConnect—a digital commons that weaves people together through shared stories, civic games, and real-world action.

## 2. LOCAL LEADER'S Vision Statement

"We can't legislate empathy—but we can design for it. If division was architected, so too must be unity. We're building a platform for that purpose."
— Minister Thabo Ngobeni

# 3. 10 Lessons from The Singapore Way Adapted to the City

| Singapore Strategy | Local Adaptation |
|---|---|
| Multiracialism by Design | "Unity Index" algorithm tracks representation in youth, media, and housing engagement |
| Shared Digital Platforms | Created a gamified app where users earn points for community contributions |
| Feedback Loops | Citizens propose local unity challenges voted on and funded in-app |
| State-Facilitated Belonging | Personalized "Welcome Journey" for new migrants includes integration modules |
| Trust Through Data | Users can view how their ward scores on inclusion, safety, and cohesion |
| Education as Integration | Integrated civic storytelling into national curriculum via digital interface |
| Policy Co-Creation | Youth can join digital "Unity Juries" that deliberate on social policy issues |
| Scalable Inclusivity | Translated into 8 languages and accessible on feature phones |
| Inter-group Mixing | Matchmaking system connects users from different backgrounds for civic missions |
| Celebration of Differences | Digital mosaic maps cultures and heritage festivals across the city live |

# 4. The Local Plan

- Name of Initiative: UbuntuConnect: The Social Integration Platform

    - Objectives:
        - Create a living digital space for building trust across race, nationality, and class
        - Incentivize everyday participation in unity-building activities
        - Track, measure, and strengthen social cohesion in real-time

    - Key Design & Policy Tools:
        - National Cohesion Index (real-time dashboard for policymakers)
        - App-based Unity Wallet (points system convertible to transit vouchers or learning credits)
        - Community Moderators trained to guide digital conversations and offline events

# 5. Implementation Framework

| Phase | Activities | Duration | Stakeholders |
|-------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Phase 1 | Beta test in 3 mixed-income wards | 5 months | Civic tech NGOs, youth leaders |
| Phase 2 | National integration of Unity Wallet & Dashboard | 6 month | Treasury, SAPS, education ministry |
| Phase 3 | "Unity Quests" rolled out in 80 schools and 300 neighborhoods | 8 months | Teachers, local artists, city officials |
| Phase 4 | Export model to other African cities | Ongoing | AU, UNDP, digital diplomacy networks |

# 6. Outcomes & Impact (18–24 Months)

- Quantitative:
  - 1.2 million users onboarded; 68% aged 16–30
  - 97,000 community unity tasks completed (clean-ups, art murals, dialogue circles)
  - Average Unity Index score rose from 62 to 78 in pilot wards

- Qualitative:
  - A Somali refugee teen co-created a civic quest now used in 25 schools
  - Interfaith elders and hip-hop activists hosted a joint event through the platform
  - A township-based Unity Council proposed and funded a local park redesign—digitally

# 7. Challenges Faced & How They Were Overcome

| Challenge | Solution or Mitigation |
|---|---|
| Digital exclusion | Built offline QR-based engagement flow for non-smartphone users |
| Trolls and abuse | Deployed civic moderators and empathy-driven |
| Fatigue with government tech | Partnered with youth influencers and cultural icons to launch platform |
| Language gaps | Community translators localized all stories and challenges |

# 8. LOCAL LEADER'S Reflections

"Singapore taught us that harmony is a choice—but also a design. With UbuntuConnect, we're not just measuring trust. We're growing it, neighborhood by neighborhood, tap by tap."

— Minister Thabo Ngobeni